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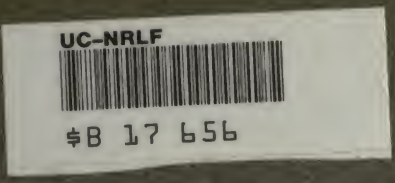

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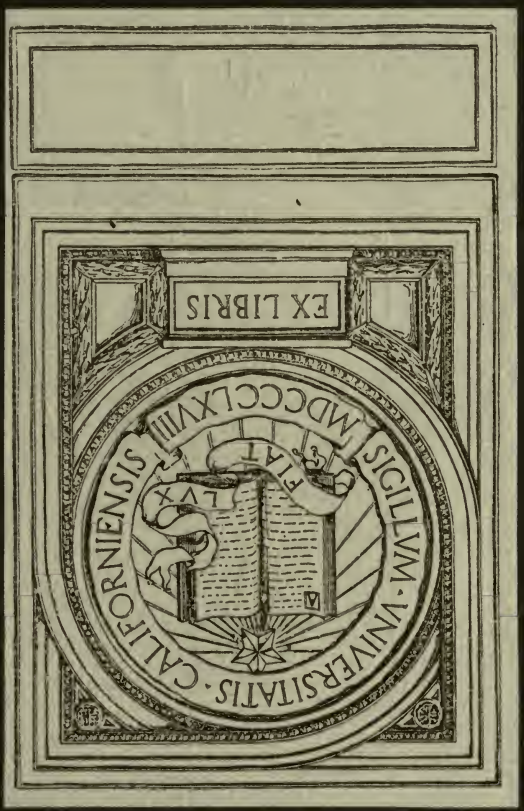

BIRMINGHAM STUDIES

IN

SOCIAL ECONOMICS

AND ADJACENT FIELDS

EDITED BY PROFESSOR W. J. ASHLEY

II

The Public Feeding of Elementary School Children

A Review of the General Situation, and an Inquiry into Birmingham Experience

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BY

PHYLLIS D. WINDER

BIRMINGHAM WOMEN'S SETTLEMENT

WITH A PREFACE BY

COUNCILLOR NORMAN CHAMBERLAIN, M.A.

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

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II

THE PUBLIC FEEDING OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

NOTE

THE Studies in this Series are the outcome of the inquiries of students working for the Social Study Higher Diploma or for the Higher Degrees of the University of Birmingham.

The Social Study Committee—consisting of teachers in the University, and of representatives of various institutions in the City of Birmingham—directs a course of preparation for Public and Social Service which combines systematic instruction at the University with practical training in the city under due supervision.

Those who have completed this course, or have been adequately prepared by similar or cognate studies elsewhere, may proceed to a Higher Diploma; submitting a Thesis embodying the results of an original investigation conducted under the supervision of the Chairman of the Committee.

Copies of the Social Study Syllabus may be obtained on application to The Secretary, The University, Birmingham.

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AND ADJACENT FIELDS

EDITED BY

PROFESSOR W. J. ASHLEY, PH.D.

DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND CHAIRMAN OF THE SOCIAL STUDY COMMITTEE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM

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PREFACE

Since reading Miss Winder's critical dissection of our methods and results in Birmingham, I have realised the delicate irony which prompted Professor Ashley to ask me for a preface. Her investigation, however, will in fact prove a valuable complement to the special inquiry which the Birmingham Education Committee have been pursuing for some time, with a view to overhauling the present system. Indeed, it was a desire for information and criticism from every source which actuated the Committee in giving Miss Winder the special facilities on which her book is based.

The experiment seems to be fully justified by the results: much of what the author says corroborates suspicions which have long existed; while her detachment from the pressing details of administration ensures a valuable freshness in her point of view.

That, in the practical administration of a scheme, there arise many difficulties which find no place in this book, goes without saying, *e.g.* in deciding the method of selecting the children; but this is not the place in which to criticise the critic, but only to congratulate her on a most thoughtful study of a problem too seldom thought out.

The book is especially valuable at a moment when the experience of the last few years has considerably modified public opinion, and has demanded corresponding changes in

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schemes dating from the commencement of the Act, and, in some cases, from a still earlier period.

Of course, many of those who support the principle of the Act still do so on sentimental grounds alone, and have never asked that their reason also should be convinced. But it is hardly realised how probably almost everyone else has, under the stress of practical experience, shifted the grounds of his support. The voluntary funds, which at first made to many all the difference between the encouragement of charity and state pauperisation, have gradually shrunk out of sight. What was once justified as a temporary expedient is now being woven into the fabric of our present social organisation. The "lack of food" of the Act is being translated by departmental ukase into "improper feeding"—whatever the cause. The meals which (it was once hoped) would tide over those in temporary distress without recourse to the Poor Law, are now subsidising the casual labourer, and supplementing the out-relief already given by the Poor Law itself.

And yet, even now, I believe, the principle of the Act can only be upheld on one understanding. Those who advocate school meals for all children as a permanency in the society of the future, and those who would once for all forbid the giving of relief except through a Relief authority, base their cases on recognisable principles. But the existing system (whatever its fortuitous advantages) can only be justified as a temporary makeshift, due to the twin evils of casual and underpaid labour—a makeshift, indeed, whose continued use will only be a measure of the community's failure to deal with these two problems.

Let me, in conclusion, express the hope that this series of Studies will advertise the possibilities of co-operation

between the trained students of modern social problems and the public bodies concerned with the same problems from the point of view of administration. It becomes increasingly clear that the latter—overworked officials, or members occupied mainly with their own business—cannot always keep up with the advance of modern sociology and research, or digest the mass of detailed information which too often is allowed to rot unused in official cellars. Yet much knowledge is vital to the efficient and economical working of the system, and it is here that the trained investigator can be called in to such advantage for consultation and report.

There are, no doubt, dangers revolving mainly round the question of personality ; tact, level-headedness, a capacity to realise the difficulties and the weaknesses of members and officials, and respect for the feelings of the subjects of the investigations—all these qualities are essential if the goodwill of public opinion is to be secured.

Personally I look forward to a development of this form of co-operation as full of hope for a steadier and more business-like advance towards the ideals at which we all are aiming.

NORMAN CHAMBERLAIN.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

To obtain information for the following thesis I was enabled by the kindness of the Birmingham Education Committee to (1) pay a good many visits to the schools when the children were receiving their breakfasts, (2) attend the meetings of the Sub-Committee when parents appeared to make application for meals, (3) have access to the case papers kept by the Attendance Officers.

The Charity Organisation Society and the City Aid Society also kindly allowed me to make use of their registers and of the case papers in their possession.

A certain number of personal visits were also paid to families where there were children receiving meals ; but it was not possible to do this on a large scale. Most of the information was therefore obtained from the sources first mentioned.

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The Public Feeding of Elementary School Children

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During recent years the problem of underfed children in elementary schools has become increasingly prominent ; and the physical condition of large numbers of the growing generation is, indeed, a subject that calls for most careful attention.

Before considering in detail the feeding of school children as it is worked to-day, it may be useful to give a brief account of the earlier history of the subject. Much interesting information is to be found in various Government blue-books, especially the reports of the Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland) 1903, the Interdepartmental Committee on Physical Deterioration 1904, and the Interdepartmental Committee on the Medical Inspection and Feeding of Children attending Elementary Schools 1905, and the really interesting nature of such reports is not yet fully appreciated by the public. The detailed evidence is printed in additional volumes, and here may be found records of the practical experiences of men and women who have given much time and thought to the matter.

There were, broadly speaking, two things which above all

others forced the subject upon the notice of public men—firstly, the growing fears for the national physique; and, secondly, the difficulties felt by the teachers in educating half-starved children. The fact that just under one-third of our army recruits were rejected on account of defective physical development, or for various ailments—and this in spite of the lowering of the standard demanded—showed that the former were not altogether ungrounded; while the reality of the latter was made evident by the action of the teachers, who in some cases actually themselves provided meals for the children.

In 1874 Mrs. Burgwin, then head-mistress of Orange Street Board School, Hackney, was distressed by the condition in which many of her children came to school. She asked a doctor to come and tell her what was the matter with them, and when he came he said, "Feed them." She began to do this at her own cost, and when the demands became too great for her to meet alone, she was joined by Mr. G. R. Sims, who placed the *Referee* newspaper at her disposal for the purpose of raising funds: in this way the financial basis of the scheme was assured. In 1906 the *Referee* fund was still by far the largest source for the feeding of elementary school children; it then had an income of £4,500. The numerous agencies that followed, among which were the "London Schools' Dinner Association," the "Destitute Children's Dinner Society," and the "Jewish Children's Penny Dinner Association," showed the reality of the need.

The formation of the "Joint Committee on Underfed Children" in 1900 was an attempt on the part of the London School Board to bring the various agencies together, to give them official recognition, to form local relief committees for administering the funds on an organised plan, and to stimulate public interest in the work.

By 1904 most of the provincial towns had some form of organisation doing similar work. In Birmingham dinners had been provided since 1884 by the "Birmingham Schools Cheap Dinners Fund" for about two and a half per cent. of the children of school age. Soup and bread and jam were served at ten centres to children from all the schools. The School Board allowed the use of the playgrounds, where the meals took place, free of rent, and also supplied gas. The system was one of the most complete in the provinces; and it was also one of the most economically managed, the total cost per head being less than $\frac{1}{2}d.$

In 1901 an equally important and rather more expensive breakfast scheme was organised in Birmingham, financed by Mr. George Hookham. It was worked in connection with fourteen schools in the poorest districts; and children, chosen by the teachers, were fed five days a week, summer and winter alike.

The subject of physical degeneration received renewed attention in the report of the Royal Commission on Physical Training (Scotland), 1903, and again in that of the Inter-departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, 1904. After hearing the evidence of doctors, school inspectors, teachers, representatives of School Boards, &c., both bodies came to the conclusion that lack of proper nourishment was one of the most serious causes that told against the physical welfare of the people.

The voluntary societies were doing much to cope with the evil, but it was too much for them. They were dependent on the fluctuating amounts of private subscriptions; and even with such official help in organisation as that afforded in London by the "Joint Committee on Underfed Children," they were unable to reach all the children in need.

The Royal Commission on Physical Training accordingly

recommended that the School Boards should be made responsible for inquiring into the case of any child coming to school in an apparently underfed condition, and also that they should try to bring such children into touch with the voluntary agencies. They did not, however, recommend that the meals should be paid for by the Education Authorities. Where voluntary funds failed, the Commissioners suggested that perhaps some simple meal might be provided to which parents might be compelled to send their children, unless they could show that they were otherwise fed. The cost of such a meal was to be paid by the parent, unless this was really impossible, in which case he was to be forced to apply to the Poor Law.

The following year the Committee on Physical Deterioration gave further attention to the subject. Evidence was collected as to the extent to which underfeeding then prevailed, and also as to the methods adopted by the voluntary associations for meeting that need. Dr. Eicholz, one of the witnesses, estimated that 16 per cent. of the elementary school children of London were in an underfed condition. He based his estimate on the number fed by voluntary agencies, and assumed that all the children fed by these agencies would be otherwise underfed. He also gave the results of a special investigation into the condition of the children attending Johanna Street Board School, Lambeth, this school being situated in a typical bad district. He considered that 90 per cent. were unable, by reason of their general physical condition, to attend to their work in a proper way, while 33 per cent. required feeding from October to March. A good deal of evidence was also given by representatives of voluntary associations in London, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Birmingham.

The Committee recommended that:

1. Where sufficient voluntary provision existed, the

local authority should support and supervise, but should abstain from taking any part in the actual supply of food.

2. Where no voluntary societies were working, or where their provision was inadequate, the local authority, subject to the consent of the Board of Education, should be permitted to give municipal aid towards the cost of the meals.

The whole subject was again reconsidered in 1905, when an Interdepartmental Committee was appointed to inquire into the "Medical Inspection and Feeding of Children attending Public Elementary Schools." The question as to the advisability of the cost of the food being borne by public funds was this time shelved, and the Committee were restricted by their terms of reference to (1) inquiring into the extent of the work done by voluntary agencies, and (2), reporting whether this work could be better organised without making any charge on rates or taxes. Much further valuable information as to the experience of voluntary bodies in dealing with administrative details was collected. Methods of selecting children, the manner of serving and supervising meals, their time and nature, were all heads of evidence.

The recommendations of the Committee may be summarised as follows :—

1. A greater interest on the part of local Education Authorities in the feeding of underfed children should be brought about by—

(*a*) A system of notification of any work done or money spent by voluntary agencies.

(*b*) Representation of the authority on any feeding agency established in its area.

2. The meals should be of a permanent and regular character. The object of an agency should be to feed a small number of the most destitute regularly rather than a large number irregularly.

3. The teachers should not be responsible for the final choice of the children to receive the meals ; such selection should be by means of a relief committee. Full use should be made of information in the possession of school-attendance officers, relieving officers, religious and philanthropic agencies, and school medical staff.

4. The meals should aim at being educative—that is to say, the children should be trained in manners, taught the uses of suitable foods, and become accustomed to seeing properly served meals. The teachers, however, should not be required to serve or supervise as part of their duties.

About six weeks after the appointment of the Committee, an attempt was made to solve the problem through the Poor Law Authorities by the issue of the Relief (School Children's) Order, 1905. This was an adaptation of sections 56 and 58 of the Poor Law Amendment Act, 1834, to meet the needs of underfed school children, and was especially intended to provide a means of dealing with neglectful parents. Sec. 56 enacts that all relief given to a man's wife, or children under sixteen, shall be considered as given to the husband or father ; sec. 58 that the Central Authority might declare or direct that such relief should be considered as given by way of loan and might be recovered from wages.

The Local Government Board made use of their powers under sec. 58, and "ordered and directed" that (1) in the case of a "special application" by a teacher, school manager, or other officer empowered by the local Education Authority on behalf of a child suffering from lack of food, relief might be given even if the father was not destitute, in the poor-law sense of the word ; (2) if the special application is rendered necessary by the habitual neglect of the father, the relief given should be considered as of the nature of a loan and should be recovered.

Provision was made, if the case was not one of urgent necessity, for notifying the father, in order to give him an opportunity of undertaking to provide food without relief. In any case the order for the relief given would have to be renewed monthly. No regulations were provided as to the mode of giving relief, but an explanatory circular issued with the order suggested that guardians would very likely find it desirable to give it through a charitable society already existing for the provision of school meals.

The intention of the Local Government Board was to leave the children whose distress was due to temporary causes to the various voluntary agencies, while they themselves undertook to deal with the children of permanently impoverished or neglectful parents through the Poor Law.

Conferences were held in several places between the Education Authorities and the Guardians to discuss what action should be taken, and in some cases co-operation was agreed upon. A certain amount of work was done under the Order, notably in Bradford, where lists were prepared by the teachers and were forwarded through the Secretary of Education to the Guardians. Many people, however, were of the opinion that the action of the Poor Law Authorities did not altogether meet the case. The children of widows or deserted wives did not come within the scope of the Order ; and there were also certain administrative difficulties. Above all, it was felt that the stigma of pauperism should not be attached to the children. It was considered that information which would help in investigation should be furnished by the Guardians, but that their association with the school should be indirect.

In the early part of 1906 a Bill "to make provision for meals for children attending public elementary schools in England and Wales" was introduced into the House of

Commons. The Bill was referred to a Select Committee, who were empowered to call witnesses.

The disadvantages of relying solely on a voluntary system were again forced upon the attention of this Committee by the evidence, and may be briefly summarised as follows :—

1. Voluntary funds were necessarily fluctuating and uncertain, and consequently it was difficult to make arrangements in advance.

2. Meals were, in many cases, given only during the winter months: evidence showed they were often needed in the summer also.

3. The dangers of overlapping and abuse were greater under voluntary systems where there was no central organisation than under one uniform official system.

4. The voluntary agencies possessed no statutory power for recovering the cost of meals from parents who were able to pay but neglected to do so.

In spite of these disadvantages it seemed undesirable that the work of such agencies should be altogether extinguished. The additional burden on the rates would be a heavy one, and retrenchments might be attempted in other directions which would be disastrous to education. The Committee recommended that some form of combination between public authorities and voluntary agencies should be attempted, and that while the Education Authority should organise and direct the provision of meals, assistance from public money should take the direction of supplementing rather than of supplanting charitable contributions.

The Committee having reported to the House, their recommendations were adopted and the Bill was passed, and came into operation in December 1906. The Act is applicable to England and Wales only,[1] and it is purely permissive.

[1] Meals are provided in Scotland under the Education Act (Scotland), 1908.

Power is given to those local Education Authorities who desire it to associate themselves with any committee undertaking to provide food for elementary school children. They may assist such committees in the organisation, preparation, and service of the meals, and for this purpose may supply buildings, furniture, apparatus, and such officers and servants as may be necessary.

Provision is made for encouraging voluntary subscriptions, and where sufficient funds are forthcoming they are to be used for defraying the cost of the actual food. Where sufficient funds are not forthcoming, however, a local authority may itself spend money out of the rates for that purpose, provided that it has first obtained the consent of the Board of Education. The total sum spent on food in any one area in one year must not exceed the amount produced by a rate of $\frac{1}{2}d.$ in the £ over that area.

Although it was hoped that voluntary funds would continue to defray the greater part of the cost of actual food, and that money from the rates would only be required to make up deficiencies, experience has shown that the relative shares have been reversed, and that voluntary contributions have steadily fallen off. This is brought out by the following table:[1]—

	1908–9	1909–10[2]	1910–11
Total cost to rates . . .	£51,839	£134,105	£153,568
Money spent on food from rates .	41,089	81,728	89,609
Voluntary contributions . .	17,831	9,813	7,537

[1] See the *Reports on the Working of the Education (Provision of Meals) Act* for the several years.

[2] The increased cost to the rates in 1909–10 is mainly due to the fact that the London County Council did not apply for the Board's sanction until December 1908. Accordingly the figures for 1908–9 include London's expenditure for three months only, while those for 1909–10 include a whole year's.

The Act also provides that the cost of meals supplied to children of parents in a position to pay should be recoverable summarily as a civil debt. This provision was intended to supply a means of dealing with neglectful parents who are able to feed their children but fail to do so. The children may now be fed at school and the cost recovered from the parent: the latter, however, may still forbid his children to attend the meals, and in the last report of the Board of Education it is stated that "503 children in eleven areas were withdrawn from attendance at the meals by reason of their parents' unwillingness to pay." In cases of persistent neglect the parent may be prosecuted for cruelty under sec. 12 of the Children's Act, 1908. The exent to which the power of recovering cost has been exercised may be gathered from the following table:[1]—

Year.	Amount Contributed by and Recovered from Parents.[2]	Percentage of Total Amount Expended.
1908–9	£335	.37 per cent.
1909–10	681	.47 ,,
1910–11	929	.62 ,,

It will be seen that the amount paid by parents has always been considerably under one per cent. of the total cost to the country. This might mean that the number of parents who neglect to feed their children when able to do so is very small, but I think it is rather due to the fact that very few authorities exercise their legal powers. The sum recovered is mainly accounted for by some ten or twelve authorities; the greater number recover nothing.

[1] This table is constructed from data to be found in the Reports for 1908–9, 1909–10, 1910–11.

[2] In the cases of sixteen authorities the sum recovered from or contributed by parents was less than 10*s*. These amounts are not included.

The various committees inquiring into the subject had expressed themselves so strongly on the question of the share of the work undertaken by teachers, that the following section was introduced to safeguard the latter :—

"No teacher seeking employment or employed in a public elementary school shall be required as part of his duties to supervise or assist, or abstain from supervising or assisting, in the provision of meals, or in the collection of the cost thereof."

The Act left the local authorities full discretion in dealing with the various administrative problems in their own areas, and no regulations were inserted as to the kind of meals to be provided, or as to methods of selecting children.

According to the latest figures, "School Canteen Committees" have been formed in 128, out of the total number of 327, local Education Authorities' areas.

Particulars as to the total number of children fed are so incomplete that it would be misleading to give any figures. Some authorities give returns as to the total number of meals provided, others do not. In many places the work is still in an experimental stage, while in others fairly complete systems have been established.

A circular issued from the Board of Education soon after the Act came into operation, pointed out the great possibilities that it opened up.

"It furnishes," the circular remarked, "unrivalled opportunities to the earnest yet wise social reformer for mitigating some of the deepest physical injuries that beset the children of the rising generation, particularly in 'slum areas,' without necessarily involving (if care and thought be exercised in its administration) undue intervention by the State in the sphere of parental responsibilities, or in the duties and influence of any properly ordered home."

The Act has not yet been in operation for quite six years, and there is still much variety of opinion as to its general effects. I think it will, therefore, probably be most useful to confine our attention in the first place to the methods of administration. In the following chapters I propose to discuss generally such questions as the best methods of selecting children, the time and nature of the meals, the educational opportunities afforded by the Act, and then to examine in greater detail its administration in Birmingham.

CHAPTER II

SOME CAUSES OF MALNUTRITION

In his report for 1910 the Chief Medical Officer for the Board of Education states that: "Defective nutrition stands in the forefront as the most important of all physical defects from which school children suffer. Indisputable though this fact is, there is no subject the elucidation of which is more baffling to the medical inspector, no condition more difficult accurately to estimate, with causes more complex and interwoven."

Systematic medical inspection has confirmed the suspicions of earlier years as to the extent of bad nutrition, but further knowledge has also shown that there is no one remedy. The causes of the evil are many, and they will only disappear with a general raising of standards and with improved social conditions, and these must necessarily be of slow growth.

Although poverty and ignorance are the principal sources of malnutrition, actual lack of food is only one of its many immediate causes. Indeed, insufficient food is generally admitted to be the principal cause in a comparatively small proportion of cases, while unsuitable and ill-cooked food is responsible for a very large number. Many a mother will boast that all her family share and share alike in the matter of food. The father is the principal bread-winner, and his strength must be maintained at all costs. It is he who has to be considered first, and his taste will decide

the family diet to a very large extent. The result is that the food provided is often unsuitable for young children, even if wholesome in itself.

It is notorious that elementary school children have a strong predilection for highly flavoured food: this is partly due to the fact that such food acts as a stimulus to their disordered appetites, and partly because they have always been fed in accordance with the tastes of their elders. As the following incident shows, school meals have already proved what can be done in encouraging a taste for simpler foods. When porridge was first introduced into one of the London schools, the children were only induced to eat it with great difficulty. After a little time, however, it became quite popular, and a lady who made inquiries from a number of grocers in the neighbourhood of the school as to their trade in oatmeal, was told that their sales had increased; showing that the new food in the school had penetrated to the home.[1]

In many of the poorest homes, bread, tea, and tinned foods form the staple diet. These require no cooking beyond, perhaps, the boiling of a kettle, and they are always at hand. Potatoes are often boiled for dinner, and fried fish or soup may be fetched from the cook-shop, but these latter are rather in the nature of luxuries.

When the mother is also an industrial worker, it is almost impossible for her to attempt any cooking in the middle of the day. The children either take "pieces" with them to school and eat them in the playground, or go home to a badly served meal eked out with pennyworths from the cook-shop.

In direct contrast to the underfed children are those

[1] Report of the Interdepartmental Committee on the Medical Inspection and Feeding of Children attending Elementary Schools, vol. ii. p. 14.

who are pampered, and malnutrition in some cases may be due to overfeeding rather than to lack of food: it is necessary to keep this in mind.

Want of sufficient sleep is another cause of much debility. Many children who live in the poorer streets are still up and about at eleven in the evening, or even later. The parents want to go out at night, and as the children cannot be left alone, they are taken with them. The Children's Act now forbids the presence of children in public-houses, but they still accompany their parents to these places and sit on the doorstep, or run about the street, while their parents are inside.

In many cases the younger children sleep with noisy elder brothers or sisters, who come to bed late and have little regard for others. From their earliest years bedtime has been very much a matter of their own choice. Parental authority in such homes is spasmodic and uncertain; and if a child refuses to go to bed when he is told, he will often get his own way.

Even when the hours of sleep are sufficient, the bedrooms are generally stuffy and ill-ventilated. The families from which these children are drawn are generally large ones, and as rent is a serious item, four, five, and even six will often be found sleeping in one room.[1]

Want of sleep and proper rest in a certain number of cases is probably due to the employment of children after school hours. There is at present little accurate information as to the number of child wage-earners outside half-timers in factories, but what information there is tends to show that their numbers are considerable.

[1] In the "Report on the home circumstances of necessitous children in twelve London Schools, 1907," the average number of persons per room was 2.65. In obtaining this figure, however, *all* the rooms in the house were counted, so the number *sleeping* in one room would naturally be greater.

The Employment of Children Act, 1903, makes it illegal to employ children between 9 P.M. and 6 A.M., but it is extremely difficult to enforce this provision, as much of the work done by these children, such as carding hooks and eyes, safety-pins, and buttons, is done at home, and much is casual work, such as running errands, or selling newspapers.

Certain diseases have a great influence upon nutrition,[1] while a state of general debility and anæmia brought on by insanitary surroundings is very common. It is often impossible for a teacher or other casual observer to tell how far such factors are responsible for a condition generally attributed to lack of food.

These various factors—lack of food, improper food, want of sleep, overwork, overcrowding, disease, and insanitary conditions—may be attributed to (1) sheer poverty, (2) ignorance and thriftlessness, and (3) criminal neglect.

Opinions vary very considerably as to the relative importance of the first two causes, but it is generally agreed that the last is only a minor one.

In considering a system of State provision for children suffering from malnutrition, it is necessary to discover (1) how far it will meet the effects of these causes, (2) how far it will remove the causes themselves, and (3) how far it may encourage them.

[1] 570 children suffering from a condition of nutrition below normal were made the subject of a special inquiry by Dr. Chate, School Medical Officer for Middlesex, in 1910. He considered that disease was largely responsible in 214 cases (37 per cent.),—45 being due to worms, 22 to adenoids, 23 to rickets, 47 to carious teeth and oral sepsis, and 77 to various other diseases, including tuberculosis, gastric conditions, and congenital causes.

CHAPTER III

PRINCIPLES AND METHODS OF SELECTING CHILDREN

I.—Methods in General

The first step to be taken in considering the present administration of the Act is an examination of the principles upon which children are selected, and the methods employed in carrying out these principles.

In the words of the Act, the meals are intended for those children who are "unable, by reason of lack of food, to take full advantage of the education provided for them." Malnutrition is a cause of "inability to take full advantage of education"; but it has already been seen that "lack of food" is only one of the many factors of malnutrition. An explanatory circular, however, issued from the Board of Education in January 1907, explained that the object of the Act was "to ensure that children attending public elementary schools shall, so far as possible, be no longer prevented by insufficiency of suitable food from profiting by the education offered in our schools, and it aims at securing that, for this purpose, suitable meals shall be available just as much for those parents who are in a position to pay as for those to whom the food must be given free of cost." The Act is clearly intended to benefit the victims of improper feeding as well as the victims of "lack of food."

In case of disease, special kinds of food may be necessary: the absence of these may prevent a child from becoming

healthy and strong, and thereby profiting by education. A mother, for instance, may be able to provide sufficient food for her healthy children, and yet be unable to afford cod-liver oil and milk for the delicate ones.

Hitherto, in selecting children who are suffering from an "insufficiency of suitable food," canteen committees may be broadly divided into those applying a physical test and those applying a poverty test[1]: that is to say—

(1) Those who have based their decision principally upon physical evidence of bad or insufficient nutrition, whether arising from poverty or other causes.

(2) Those who have regarded the family income as the best criterion of the child's need, the question of nutrition being investigated subsequently, if at all.

Doubtless in many cases the children selected on either system will be the same: nevertheless there will be a certain proportion who, while fulfilling the necessary conditions under the one system, will fail to do so under the other. There are children showing no signs of physical defect who, on account of abnormal home conditions, will speedily deteriorate unless they are fed, and there are also children showing all the signs of malnutrition who come from homes where the income is above the poverty scale.

Although a settled policy is necessary to ensure uniformity of administration, the best results will probably be obtained when a good deal of attention is paid to individual needs. Hitherto the tendency has been towards too rigid an application of one of the two tests, and an exclusion of the other. The Act is intended to be both curative and preventive; and the need of the child, whether actually present or likely

[1] See Report of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education for 1910, p. 253.

to arise in the near future, should be the first point of consideration.

If a child is underfed, and the parents are in a position to pay, it is essential that they should be made to do so. On the other hand, there may be some children who are not suffering, although their parents' income is below the poverty scale, and it is possible that it is unnecessary to feed them. Such children, however, need to be very carefully watched ; for it is most probable they will sooner or later become affected by their parents' necessity.

The need of the individual child is then the first consideration. How is it to be detected ? The greater the number of sources from which notification may come, the less likelihood there is of any children being overlooked.

1. The teacher is at once suggested as being the most likely person. He (or she) is in daily contact with the children, and knows them better probably than anyone outside the home. The teacher therefore should prepare lists of all apparently ill-nourished children that he comes across, and forward them to the proper quarter ; but here his work must almost necessarily cease, and the ultimate selection should rest with an outside body. For while a teacher may be able to give much useful information as to individual children, he cannot be expected to know the home conditions of all those who are under his care. He has no time, and perhaps few qualifications for investigation. The personal qualities, indeed, that go to the making of a good administrator of relief are not necessarily the same as those which go to the making of a good teacher.

In many cases, where the teacher was the final selector of children under the voluntary systems, a deplorable amount of begging at the school was encouraged. Some teachers were almost bullied by parents who said, " You can put so and so's

child on; why do you not let my children have a meal?" As the school is primarily intended to train the mind and develop character, the less it is associated in the parents' mind with the giving of relief the better.

2. Another source from which much useful work may be secured in the detection of malnutrition is the school medical inspection. Co-operation between the school medical service and other branches of the Education Authority's work, intended to promote physical well-being, is a need that is now being recognised.[1]

3. A knowledge of the homes of the children is also very necessary. Healthy children may be overlooked at school; yet their home conditions, owing to sickness or unemployment, may be such that they will speedily deteriorate unless they are fed. Such knowledge is possessed by the attendance officer, who may either notify the case himself, or urge the parent to apply.

4. Application by the parent would indeed seem to be the most natural way of making the child's needs known. It has been said with some indignation that the Act has made the teacher more responsible than the parents for seeing that no child is underfed. This is only superficially true; for although the teacher may be the first to notify an underfed child, this notification is followed by an inquiry, and if the parent has been neglectful his responsibilities will thus be brought home to him. If no meals were given unless the parent applied on his own initiative, two classes of children would be more or less excluded—

(1) Children of the more respectable and sensitive parents, who will sacrifice even their children's

[1] See Report of the Chief Medical Officer of the Board of Education, 1910. The number of Education Authorities in 1908–9, in which the school medical officer or school nurse had some share in the recommendation of children was 85, while in 1909–10 the number had increased to 109.

welfare, so great is their fear and hatred of pauperisation.

(2) Children of neglectful parents, who will not run the risk of inquiry.

The names of all children suffering from malnutrition, whatever its cause, whether notified by teacher, school doctor, attendance officer, parent, or anyone else, have to be brought before a selection committee.

This body, called in the Act "a Canteen Committee," in some areas consists entirely of a sub-committee of the Education Committee, *e.g.* in Bradford, Birmingham, and Hull; but in a good number it is a composite body, with representatives from the Education Authority, Board of Guardians, Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, Charity Organisation Society, and other philanthropic agencies. In the areas of the London County Council, the "Canteen Committees" are represented by the "Children's Care Committees," which have been established with a view to promoting the general welfare of the children in the schools under their charge. The members "follow up" the medical inspections in the school with a view to securing proper treatment, and give advice to children entering employment, as well as select the children for free meals. The local committees attached to each school consist of from two to three school managers, together with an equal number of persons selected by them from a list approved by the Central Committee, and an equal number selected by the Central Committee itself. This latter is a sub-committee of the Education Committee, and acts as an advisory body supervising the work of all the local committees, but taking no part in the actual selection of children.

Whatever its constitution, the duty of the Canteen Com-

mittee is the final selection of children to be admitted to the meals. It is for them to determine—

(1) Which children shall be admitted free,
(2) Which children shall be admitted on parents' payments,
(3) Which children shall be refused.

This latter class would probably consist of those whose condition is not due to lack of food or improper feeding, but is the result of one, or several, of the other causes of malnutrition—viz. want of sleep, overwork out of school hours, lack of ventilation, or disease. If these children are already receiving a sufficiency of proper food, they would not benefit by the meals, but they should not on this account be altogether disregarded. As I hope to show later, the value of much of the work done under the Act depends upon the way in which it is linked up to other social work.

A system under which a wise decision is possible in each individual case is probably at present a counsel of perfection rather than a practical possibility, for it assumes that in each case a knowledge of the cause of malnutrition can be obtained. We know this is very difficult, but very much more knowledge than is at present used might be obtained.

Investigations are generally made by an attendance officer, and, although he may have a very fair knowledge of the homes, he is not a health visitor: his work is mainly to inquire into the family income, and not into the causes of the child's ill-health.

In London, where the investigations are made by a Care Committee, it is usual to send notices to the parents, asking them to be present at the school at an appointed time: a number of members sit in rota (unless this duty is undertaken by the secretary) to record particulars on case papers.

The subsequent home-visiting is probably undertaken by a different member ; and in this way the friendly relations, so necessary if the true cause of malnutrition is to be discovered and remedied, are not imperilled. When difficulties are experienced in ascertaining the true income of the family, or where either parent is suspected of intemperate habits, and of not paying for meals when able to do so, the case is referred to a specially selected attendance officer. There are, indeed, certain disadvantages attached to investigations made by voluntary workers, whose ideas may vary as to what is needful or desirable. They cannot always be relied upon to be at their post when needed ; and their knowledge of the neighbourhood and of local conditions may be very much smaller than that of an attendance officer. The ideal method would probably be to have a specially trained paid visitor, with some knowledge of health work, for necessary investigations, and to make use of the voluntary workers for subsequent visiting.

We have already seen that in making the final selection of children, committees generally apply either (*a*) a physical or (*b*) a poverty test.

(*a*) The number of authorities in 1908–9, who left the final selection exclusively in the hands of the school medical officer, was under a dozen. The best example perhaps of this method of working is the system adopted at Brighton, where the school medical officer reports that "all children for whom an application form is received are weighed and measured, and in special cases thoroughly examined by the school medical officer, or school doctor. During 1910, 1,633 children were examined, and a report made to the canteen branch sub-committee on the advisability or not of giving free meals on medical grounds. Many of these were examined on two or three occasions, the total number of

examinations made being 2,392. The children recommended for free meals were those of deficient weight in relation to height, tuberculous and anæmic children, &c. Of the applications received, 45 per cent. of boys and 42 per cent. of girls were recommended for free meals. If possible, the parent pays part or the whole of the cost, inquiry being made by the school nurse."[1]

(*b*) By far the larger number of authorities adopt the "Poverty Test," with the help of "Poverty Scales": that is to say, they make inquiries as to the family income, deduct the rent, and then divide the result by the number of persons in the family: if the amount per head is under that specified in the scale, the meals are given. Now the success of a poverty scale obviously depends upon being able to get a true estimate of the family income; and a certain amount of difficulty is experienced in doing this. When a worker is working for one firm, the amount given may be verified from the employer's wages book, but in the case of casual workers, or men working on their own account, this is not possible. In such cases, however, a general knowledge as to the usual wage obtained by such workers in the neighbourhood may be used as a check.

A certain amount of variety exists in the "scales" used by different authorities: most, however, provide for the feeding of children coming from homes where the weekly income is less than from 2*s.* to 3*s.* a head, after the deduction of rent. The city of Bradford is an example of a place adopting a system of selection based on the use of a poverty scale. It is worked as follows:[2] "Children considered to be in need are notified by the teachers, who accept applica-

[1] Figures for Brighton, 1909–10: total cost to rates, £543. Amount paid by parents, £11.

[2] From a paper read by Mr. Walter Milledge at the National Conference on the Prevention of Destitution (1911), p. 134.

tions from parents or any interested persons. In the ordinary course the home is first visited by the attendance officer, who fills up a case paper containing a statement and such information as he may be able to obtain in the neighbourhood. The statement of the wages of the head of the family is verified by inquiry from the employers. The case is then considered by the Canteen Committee, which sits weekly, to deal with new cases and to scrutinise the monthly reports on old cases. The decision follows approximately the following scale: families with an income averaging less than 2*s.* per head, over and above the rent, are granted breakfasts and dinners for the school children; if the income exceeds 2*s.* per head, but is less than 3*s.*, dinners only are provided; above that scale the parents are charged from a $\frac{1}{2}d.$ per meal to the full cost, 2*d.*, in proportion to their ability to pay. Attempts are made to recover the cost of meals from parents who should make provision, but recovery is extremely difficult. There is a warrant officer (plain clothes) attached to the staff, to whom is entrusted the investigation of cases of special difficulty. His authority with a certain class is a valuable asset, and his visits have been productive of good effects in many unhopeful cases." All cases receiving free meals are registered and visited by the Guild of Help: this co-operation between the Education Authority and a voluntary association is also found to be a fruitful opportunity for much useful social work, aiming at a general all-round improvement of the family.

In any system a certain number of children, to whom the meals would be a benefit, will be overlooked; indeed, the difficulties of selection seem so great to some people that they would do away with it altogether, and would allow any children who liked to come to the meals, without discrimination or inquiry. The economic and social effects of such a policy can be more conveniently dealt with in another chapter;

but I think it may be said here that the abolition of all inquiry would at least take with it many opportunites for social service of a most important kind. The most lasting results in social work are the outcome of personal influence and of mutual friendships between the would-be helper and the one to be helped. Such relations are impossible unless there is some excuse to bring the two together, and there is hardly any medium through which it is easier to begin an acquaintance than that of the children. Inquiries and investigations are not made from a feeling of curiosity, nor should their primary purpose be to prevent abuse. They are made because it is impossible to help in the wisest way unless the circumstances are known.

If the home conditions of each child fed at school are known, there is an opportunity for the inquirer to take an interest in that home, to help over material difficulties if that be the need, to inspire with new hope, or to convince of weakness and error, and often indeed to learn much from the patient, hard-working lives that it is his object to befriend.

II.—Methods of Selecting Children adopted in Birmingham

The principle of selection used in Birmingham since the adoption of the Act in 1907 is that of applying a "poverty test." The scale used allows meals to be granted if the family income, after the deduction of rent, does not exceed 2*s.* 9*d.* per head from Michaelmas to Easter, or 2*s.* 6*d.* per head from Easter to Michaelmas. Applications are sent to the Education offices on special forms by the head teacher, who makes them either on his own initiative, or in response to requests from parents, or other interested persons. He is asked to state the reasons which led him to think that the

child is in need of food. The forms are then handed to the attendance officer, who visits the home and fills in family particulars; the names and ages of all members of the household; the occupation, employer's name and address; earnings of any who are at work; any income from other sources, such as lodgers, Guardians, charitable persons or societies; the rent, and any remarks he may have to make. At the same time he leaves a paper requesting the parent to appear before a member of committee on the following Tuesday evening. Meanwhile, temporary tickets are granted by the teacher for a fortnight, pending inquiries.

If the parent fails to put in an appearance, he or she is given another chance the following week. If there is another failure to appear, the temporary tickets are stopped and the child is taken off the feeding list. Notifications are sent to the head teacher of all cases allowed,[1] and also of applications refused.

The table on page 28 shows the way in which applications were dealt with in 1909, 1910, and 1911.

During these three years 22,753 applications were sent in, 15,164 of which were granted, the remaining 7,589 being refused.

The grounds on which these 7,589 cases were refused may be divided into three.

A. In 2,532[2] cases the parents told the attendance officer that they did not wish their children to go to the school meals, and that they were able to feed them at home.

These parents would probably belong to three classes—

(1) Those who really were able to provide for their children.

[1] The length of the grant is at the discretion of the presiding member; the normal period is four weeks, but in doubtful cases it is generally a week, while in the case of widows it is for three months.

[2] These numbers refer to "children concerned," not "families."

(2) The more respectable and sensitive ones, who shrank from accepting public help.

(3) The neglectful and careless ones, who would not run the risk of inquiry and consequent "showing up."

Table (compiled from statistics given in the Reports of the Birmingham Education Committee) showing how the applications for free breakfasts have been dealt with during the three years ending November 1909, 1910, 1911.[1]

New Applications.	1909.		1910.		1911.	
	Families.	Children.	Families.	Children.	Families.	Children.
Number of new applications received.	4,615	10,564	3,194	7,500	1,935	4,689
Number who told Attendance Officer that they were able to provide meals, and who were therefore not asked to meet Committee.	662	1,098	466	819	309	615
Number summoned to meet Committee.	3,953	9,466	2,728	6,681	1,626	4,074
Number of applications granted	2,702	6,907	1,976	5,156	1,174	3,101
Number refused on account of income	59	143	44	103	46	111
Number who did not appear, and whose applications were therefore refused	1,192	2,416	708	1,422	406	802
Renewals.						
Number not desiring renewals	1,616	4,023	1,289	3,264	822	2,013
Number to meet Committee with respect to renewals	1,874	13,125	3,891	10,218	2,468	6,715
Number who did not appear, and whose applications were therefore refused	1,533	4,042	1,150	2,643	557	1,422
Number of applications refused when parent attended meeting	68	188	88	221	52	128
Number of applications granted on appearance of parent	3,273	8,900	2,653	7,354	1,859	5,165
Number renewed without appearance of parent	6,157	15,348	4,756	12,301	2,884	7,591

[1] In 1911 the year was one of 41 school weeks, in 1909 and 1910 of 44 school weeks.

B. 357 cases were refused by the Committee on the ground that the family income was above that allowed by the scale.

C. 4,700 cases were refused because the parent failed to appear before the Committee. It is difficult to find out why so many failed to appear; but the following are probably some of the main reasons:—

1. The parents "thought better of it" after they had given particulars to the attendance officer. These parents would probably belong to the same classes as *A* (2) and *A* (3)—viz. the more respectable and sensitive, and the neglectful.

2. The parents found it impossible to leave home or to attend at the time fixed. The difficulties which some parents find in leaving a young family alone at home, or in going long distances and waiting sometimes a couple of hours before they can get back again, are perhaps not fully realised. It is a mistake to think that the out-of-work father is always a man of leisure. He often tramps all day seeking for work, and may have just heard of a chance on the day when he is summoned to attend the Committee. When he is ill the wife has to appear, and her difficulties of getting away from home are much increased. The hour fixed is from 5.30 to 6.30 P.M., but it is almost impossible to find a time at which all working-class parents can attend. Cases have occurred where the father has been obliged to pay tram fares in order to arrive in time to prove his inability to feed his children.

One difficulty might perhaps be preventable. When—as too frequently happens—the member of Committee is unexpectedly prevented, on account of Council meetings or for some other reason, from being present, the cases are taken by a superintendent attendance officer, but there is always half an hour's delay or more, and sometimes the parents do

not get away until 7.30. The children left at home may get into much mischief and danger during this time, and this is a constant source of worry for the more careful mothers.

3. A certain number will go to the teacher and get a temporary ticket for a fortnight, but will take no further trouble.

In going through cases one is often struck with the number of times an application has been made for some particular child, and the way in which it has again and again lapsed after a fortnight because the parent failed to appear.

4. There may be a small number whose circumstances have improved between the times of application and the time of appearance before the Committee. This is especially likely in out-of-work cases, when the father may get back into work quite unexpectedly.

An inquiry into the family income and occupations of a number of families for whose children applications were sent in but did not, for various reasons, lead to food being provided, goes to show that, on the whole, their position was much the same as that of families whose children were fed, the main difference being that the latter took trouble to obtain meals while the former did not.[1]

The outstanding fact exhibited by these figures is that, roughly, one-third of the children notified (apparently with some reason) as being in need of food do not get fed, and that these children are—

(1) Those who really do get sufficient food at home.

Their malnutrition may have been due to improper feeding, want of sleep, overwork, or disease.

(2) Those who do not get sufficient food at home, but whose parents do not like to accept public help.

(3) Those who do not get sufficient food at home, but

[1] See Chapter VI.

whose parents are careless or neglectful, and either will not trouble or dare not face inquiry.

The following inferences, I think, may be drawn from these facts :—

1*st.* A system under which the personal appearance of the parent before a committee is a *sine quâ non* will exclude many children that need feeding.

2*nd.* A system based upon a rigid application of a poverty scale, where no account is taken of physical condition, will exclude children from homes where money is being spent on drink, gambling, or in other wasteful ways, as well as children from homes where exceptional circumstances, such as much sickness, make it impossible to manage properly on the sum allowed by the scale.

In short, one of the most important deciding factors in the Birmingham system is not the need of the child but the attitude of the parents.

It is very difficult to decide whether the personal appearance of the parent before the Committee is a procedure that could be dispensed with or not.

The appearance undoubtedly is good in that—

(1) It enforces a sense of parental responsibility.

(2) It relieves the attendance officer or teacher of any odium in connection with refusals. The cases might be decided by a Committee without the attendance of parents, as in Bradford. If this procedure is adopted, however, the decisions should not be conveyed to the parent by a teacher or attendance officer, as in the case of refusal such action might result in bad feeling between the officials and the parents, which would be injurious to the work of the former in other directions.

(3) It gives a member of the Committee an opportunity of seeing the parent.

On the other hand—

(1) The compulsory attendance of the parent excludes, to a certain extent, the children of sensitive or neglectful parents.

(2) It is often a great inconvenience to the parent to leave home or lose time at work.

(3) The meeting between the member of Committee and the parent is not really of much benefit. The numbers to be seen are so large, and the parents follow one after another at such a speed that the member's part of the business is apt to become a mere formal initialing of the grant: it is seldom possible to pay much attention to individual cases, and applications are in practice necessarily granted or refused simply according to whether the family income is, or is not, above the poverty scale.

(4) The collection of all kinds of people in one place for the purpose of applying for relief is not perhaps altogether a good thing. It certainly makes the more sensitive still less willing to appear.

Other towns have managed to work without this appearance of the parent. Even if it does not seem altogether wise to abolish it in Birmingham, the administration could be made more efficient by a more systematic looking up of children, on whose behalf applications have been received but not granted. When a parent says he does not desire the meals for his children, or is refused on the ground of income, or fails to appear, a notice is now sent to the head teacher with a special form, which he is asked to fill in and return if the child again comes to school without food. These forms are very little made use of. If the child does go to school again without food, the teacher commonly sends in a new application form, which is treated as a new case ; the parent is visited, fails to appear, and the whole procedure is again gone through. It might perhaps be possible for the

children of parents who refuse the meals, or fail to appear, to be examined by the school doctor. If he reports that they are ill-nourished, they could be more persistently followed up, and in the case of neglectful parents who could afford to pay, the meals could be provided and the cost recovered.

In some towns parents are given an opportunity of voluntarily sending their children to the meals and of paying the cost (usually from 1½*d.* to 3*d.* a meal). In Birmingham this is practically never done; and in cases where the children really need feeding it would probably be a good thing to encourage the parents to do this, when their income is too large to allow the meals to be given free. In the following table[1] the amount paid by parents in Birmingham is the

Year.	Birmingham.	Percentage of Amount paid by Parents of Total Cost to Rates.				
	Amount paid by or recovered from Parents.	Birmingham.	Bradford.	Brighton.	Bath.	All England and Wales.
		Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.	Per Cent.
1908–9	£5	.16	1.98	1.2	9.02	.56
1909–10	£7	.21	2.12	2.02	12.98	.49
1910–11	£3	.08	2.85	1.66	8.07	.77

amount recovered in cases where they have made false statements as to their incomes, or where additional circumstances have come to light which show that they are able to maintain their children without the help of free meals. In such cases they are charged 2*d.* for every meal supplied.

[1] In giving the total of all sums paid by or recovered from parents in different towns all amounts under £1 are ignored in the returns made; and it is not always clear whether the authorities have deducted anything in respect of the expenses of recovery or not.

A greater amount of co-operation between the Canteen Committee, the School Medical Service, and the various local philanthropic agencies, as is the custom at Bradford, would be very beneficial. When meals were first started in Birmingham, the names of those receiving them were sent to the City Aid Society's Mutual Registration Scheme. The extra clerical work involved, however, was very heavy, and this has now been discontinued. The Society still asks all new applicants if their children are receiving free meals, but no direct communications pass between them and the Education Committee. If, at some time in the future, the Care Committee system is extended in Birmingham, the looking up of "non-appearers" would be very useful work.

CHAPTER IV

THE TIME AND NATURE OF THE MEAL

THERE are few points in connection with school meals on which there is more variety of opinion than those of the time and nature of the meal. Witnesses before the various committees inquiring into the feeding of school children gave many arguments supporting the relative merits of breakfast and dinner, while there are also some considerations in favour of a meal in the late afternoon when all school work is over.

Those who think that breakfast should be the meal given, where there is only one, maintain that—

1. Otherwise the children would get nothing to eat from tea-time over night until dinner the next day, while the heaviest school work is done in the morning.

2. Parents living literally from hand to mouth often earn enough during the morning to provide some kind of meal at midday.

3. The laziness of mothers more frequently leads to the child's loss of breakfast than of dinner.

4. The offer of breakfast has the advantage of bringing the child punctually to school.

Those who are in favour of dinner hold that—

1. Dinner is regarded in England as the principal meal of the day, and is usually more solid and satisfying than breakfast.

2. The cases where a child goes absolutely breakfast-

less are rare, while the absence of the mother at work during the day often makes the dinner a very precarious meal.

3. Children often have no appetite for a solid breakfast after passing the night in stuffy rooms.

4. It is more important to have a meal before physical than before mental work. An inadequate meal in the morning is therefore not of much consequence so long as the child gets well fed in the middle of the day.

Advocators of a late afternoon meal base their opinion upon the facts that—

1. Food is more necessary after the day's work than after the night's rest.

2. Mental work is not good after a hearty meal. A substantial midday meal tends to make the children sleepy in the afternoon.

3. If the meal is given as near as possible to the evening, the children will sleep better at night.

4. There is always an element of haste at both breakfast and dinner. At breakfast, because the children come as late as possible and the rooms have to be got ready for teaching, and at dinner, again because there is not much time and the rooms have to be ventilated and swept before afternoon school.[1]

In Birmingham, breakfast is the only meal given at present, although an experiment has recently been tried at one of the schools of providing a meal at midday, or after school, for two groups of children.

Some authorities provide both breakfast and dinner. In such cases the attendance at both meals is generally confined to children from the poorest homes only. In Bradford, for example, children from families where the weekly income

[1] Where class-rooms are not used for feeding this does not apply. In Birmingham practically all the meals are served in class-rooms.

is under 2*s.* per head, after the deduction of rent, are admitted to breakfasts and dinners, but where the income is 3*s.* per head they are admitted to the dinners only.

The following table shows the number of authorities supplying breakfasts only, dinners only, breakfasts and dinners, and other meals.

Year.	Breakfasts only.	Dinners only.	Breakfasts and Dinners.	Other Meals.
1908–9	28	43	38	2
1909–10	36	54	35	0
1910–11	37	52	35	3

With regard to the actual food supplied considerable variety naturally exists, owing to differences both in the time of the meal and in the amount spent.

The conditions which the food should fulfil are given in the Birmingham School Medical Officer's Report for 1911, and I cannot do better than quote them :—

1. "It should as far as possible supply those food constituents in which the usual food taken by the children is deficient—*i.e.* the proteids and fats. Those constituents, moreover, should be in proportion to one another.

2. "Other things being equal, such palatability and variety should be introduced as may exercise tonic effect on the mucous membrane of the stomach and bowels.

3. "The food should introduce warmth into the system.

4. "The digestibility should be such that the food is capable of digestion by weakly children. If possible, the consistency should be such as to give exercise in mastication."

The children's staple diet at home is tea, bread, and lard, butter, or jam. Fresh milk is very seldom used. The meals should then, as far as possible, avoid much bread

and tea, and should aim at introducing foods rich in proteids and fats.

One of the best breakfast foods is porridge. Served with treacle, or sugar, and milk, and followed by bread and dripping, it forms an almost ideal meal, and has been adopted by many authorities. It is generally acknowledged to be far superior to the cocoa, bread, and jam which is still given in many places, and was at first almost the only form of breakfast given. Inquiries at schools where the two kinds of breakfasts are served on alternate days show the children's decided preference for the porridge breakfast.

Considerable variety exists where dinner is the meal provided: some authorities give a good deal of soup and bread without much change from day to day; others have most carefully thought-out menus for the week or month, providing for different dinners each day and making use of fish and meat pies, vegetarian dishes, Irish stew, roast meat, stewed fruit, milk and suet puddings, cake and currant bread, as well as the usual soup. The cost per head is generally somewhere between 1*d.* and 2*d.* A number of typical menus will be found in the Appendix.

CHAPTER V

SERVICE AND SUPERVISION

The educational possibilities afforded by the meals have been much emphasised, both during the debates in Parliament and in the reports issued by the Board of Education since the Act came into operation. The opportunities for teaching the children good manners, cleanliness, and orderliness may have great results; and rather more than half the Education Authorities providing meals have drawn up simple regulations to be observed in the dining-rooms.

A meal at which all the family sit down to a properly appointed table, with a clean cloth and crockery, is almost unknown in some of the homes from which the children come. Food generally lies about all day, and there is no settled "meal time." When a child feels hungry, or is specially troublesome and has to be kept good, he is given a "piece," on which some lard or butter is hastily dabbed, and he eats it walking about the room or in the street. Even if the "grown ups" are found sitting at the table the children will nearly always come and help themselves, and then eat their portions walking about the room.

There is a certain amount of variety in different towns, both as to the places where the children are fed and as to the amount of supervision provided. In some the children are fed at the school they attend, in others at centres serving a number of schools; while some authorities still work with a system of coupons which can be exchanged at ordinary restaurants. The latter system is generally acknowledged

to be the least satisfactory: supervision is very difficult, if not almost impossible. In one case the children behaved so badly that the keeper of the restaurant engaged a woman specially to keep order.

The use of class-rooms for the purpose is generally undesirable, especially when dinner is the meal provided ; proper ventilation between morning and afternoon school is unworkable, while the mess made by spilled soup, &c., is unpleasant both to teachers and children.

Feeding in centres may be more convenient in some ways, but there are at least two considerable disadvantages. They are often at some little distance from the school, and the journeys to and fro are particularly bad for delicate, ill-shod children in wet weather. It is much more difficult to supervise large numbers of children, individual attention becomes almost impossible, and good manners are more difficult to teach.

The ideal is to have a dining-room attached to each school, which should not be used for teaching, but could be utilised for many other suitable purposes, especially medical inspection. When building new schools Education Committees now have power to include a dining-room.

The Act, as we have seen, provides that no teacher shall be required as part of his duties to supervise, or assist in any way, at the meals. It is extremely necessary that teachers should not have their midday opportunity for rest taken away ; and experience has shown that where this happens the afternoon work has suffered. Nevertheless, in many places they have given their services voluntarily ; and at Bradford, where perhaps one of the most successful schemes for service and supervision is at work, they have voluntarily formed a rota and are paid for their services.

In the same city monitresses are appointed from among

the elder girls attending the centre. After putting on the aprons and sleeves provided, each one lays her own table, hands the food to the children, scrapes up the bits, collects dirty plates, spoons, forks, &c., and packs them tidily in boxes ready for returning to the depot. One teacher, assisted by a monitress, divides the food; the others supervise the behaviour of the children, giving lessons in courtesy and seemliness in eating. Children are required to come with clean hands and faces, and to keep the tablecloths as clean as possible. No child is allowed a second course until he has finished the first. Infants and small eaters are served at separate tables.

Monitresses wearing aprons and sleeves (made in the schools as part of the girls' needlework lesson) also act as servers in Nottingham, supervision being maintained by a rota of school managers, teachers, and various philanthropic persons.

At Liverpool meals are at present served by employees of the caterer providing them, although a scheme for serving meals from a central kitchen is in hand. Attendance officers attend daily, while surprise visits are paid from time to time by voluntary helpers and teachers.

Attendance officers also keep order among the children at Manchester.

Caretakers, or special servers paid by the Education Committee, are made use of in many places.

Some centres encourage voluntary helpers to provide decorations for the table. At Wallasey one teacher reports that, "It has been an honour to carry the plants for the table, and I feel that the remembrance of these dinners, with tables laid and meals properly served, will have a lasting and beneficial effect on many of the children."

At Birmingham breakfasts only being given, the arrange-

ments for service are more simple. The meals, in nearly every case, take place at the actual school the child attends, and are served, with a few exceptions, in class-rooms. The disadvantages of class-rooms are perhaps not so great in the case of breakfasts as in that of dinners; but nevertheless they are not very suitable for feeding purposes. The desks are often narrow, and slope in such a way that the children are likely to upset their food; while, where long forms are used as seats, it is difficult for the children to get in and out without pulling off the tablecloths.

In some of the Aston schools folding tables covered with white oil-cloth are used, and these are far superior to the desks: the children can sit round a table, and this makes the distribution of food more of the nature of a social meal. The caretaker, or his wife, serves the food, and is helped in some cases by one or two of the elder children. The children are quiet and well behaved; but all the time is taken in serving the food, and there is no opportunity to teach individual children to eat slowly. The tendency, especially with the cocoa breakfast, is to gulp down the drink, eat part of the bread and jam, and carry the rest away, sometimes packed in paper, but not unfrequently stuck under an accommodating jersey or blouse! The porridge has to be eaten sitting down in the room, and this is a great advantage. The bread and dripping which go with it, however, are generally taken away.

It is true that the amount given is often more than the child can eat at one time, and by saving part he can finish it at lunch. In some cases caretakers have told me that the children stay in the playground all dinner-time, and the "piece" saved from breakfast is all they have. The habit seems a bad one, however, from an educational point of view. The children are accustomed at home to eat walking

about at all times of the day, and if food is allowed to be carried away the school meal will not teach them otherwise.

The quiet atmosphere is one of the great advantages to be gained by feeding in small numbers. Only at one school was talking forbidden ; this unnatural restriction being at one of the bigger schools, where the number fed generally averages about a hundred.

Some caretakers insist on punctuality, and show considerable method in making the children put away their basins and mugs tidily ; in other schools there seems little attempt to do more than get the food served out, and the children are allowed to come and go in rather a haphazard fashion.

In one school the same mugs were used twice over for different children without being washed. The supply of utensils at several of the schools was too small for the numbers fed, and this makes it easier to get into bad habits.

Dippers for serving milk and cocoa are supplied by the Education Committee, but they are not always used, and caretakers should be instructed to use them instead of dipping a cup into the can : this would make the serving more cleanly, and would accustom the children to seeing tidy habits.

The importance of paying attention to the teaching of good habits is enforced by the last report of the Board of Education on the working of the Act. "In some places the children are made to come with clean hands, are marshalled in and out of the rooms in an orderly fashion, and are taught to eat with tidiness and behave quietly and well ; but in many cases it is only too apparent that little attention is paid to these things." While "they do not wish to give the impression that there has been a universal disregard of the educational possibilities of the work under the Act, they wish to indicate that full use has not been made of them."

CHAPTER VI

FAMILY CIRCUMSTANCES

The following are the results of my inquiry into the circumstances of (*A*) 200 families from which there are children receiving free meals at Elementary Schools in Birmingham, and of (*B*) 43 families in which there are children on behalf of whom applications have been received but not granted.

A. The method of inquiry was as follows:—Ten schools in the centre of the city were selected for the purposes of the investigation, as being typical of the schools from which the largest numbers of necessitous children are drawn. They were—

Alma Street Council School; St. Chad's Roman Catholic (voluntary school); Cowper Street Council School; Dartmouth Street Council School; Elkington Street Council School; Floodgate Street Council School; St. George's, Church of England (voluntary school); Rea Street Council School; Smith Street Council School; Summer Lane Council School.

An attempt was made to obtain particulars of the family circumstances of all the children fed at these schools during February 1912.

The general conditions of trade were normal, and the investigation was completed before the effects of the coal strike were felt. The number of children concerned was 557;[1] they came from 200 families.

[1] The number of children fed at the schools chosen form just under one-third of the total number fed in Birmingham.

By the courtesy of the Education Committee, family particulars, names, and ages of members, their occupations and earnings, total income and rent, were obtained from the case papers prepared by the Attendance Officers. Further information, and in many cases the previous family history for several years, was obtained from case papers in the possession of the City Aid and Charity Organisation Societies. The families have been classified, according to what appeared to be the principal cause of necessity, into four main classes :[1]—

1. Distress due to lack of employment.
2. Distress due to sickness or disablement.
3. Incomplete families—father dead, deserted, or in prison.
4. Families where the father was in full work, distress being due to the size of family or the lowness of wage.

Particulars are given in each class as to the occupation and earnings of the chief bread-winner, and as to the family income (including all earnings of parents and children, money from lodgers, relief from Guardians or charitable persons, or societies) after the deduction of rent.

In order to make the position of one family comparable with that of another, all incomes have been brought to one common denominator.

For this purpose it has been assumed[2] that :—

1. An adult is anyone over 14 ; and is reckoned as 1.
2. The requirements of a child 5-14 are three-quarters of those of an adult, and those of an infant or child up

[1] This classification is adapted from that used by the L.C.C. investigators in their report on the home circumstances of necessitous children in twelve selected schools, 1907.

[2] This is the scale used by the L.C.C. investigators, and was adopted by them after consultation with various authorities on dietetics and family budgets.

to 5 years are one-half of those of an adult; and are reckoned as .75 and .50 respectively.

The standard family to which all others are adjusted consists of 2 parents and 4 children, equivalent to 5 adults.

For example, a family consisting of 2 parents, 4 children 5-14, and 2 children under 5 would be considered equal to 2 + 4 (.75) + 2 (.50) or 6 adults; or a family consisting of a mother, one girl 12, one boy 2, would be considered equal to 1 + .75 + .50 or 2.25 adults.

An income of 20*s.* for the first family (6 adults) would be treated as equivalent to 16*s.* 8*d.* for the standard family (with 5 adults), while one of 10*s.* for the second family (2.25 adults) would be treated as equivalent to 22*s.* 5*d.*

The wages stated are those derived from the case papers prepared by the attendance officers. When a worker is employed by one firm regularly, the wages are verified by the Education Committee, and the figure given is the average of the previous four weeks, as entered in the employer's wages book. In the case of casual workers, verifications of wages are practically impossible; nevertheless, the amount given is probably somewhere near the truth, as it is checked by a general knowledge of the usual sum earned by such workers.

In each class an attempt has also been made to estimate the number of cases in which distress is due, at least partially, to "character," or in which one or both parents is a "bad character." This is extremely difficult. The evidence for placing a family in this category is generally one or other of the following statements: "In prison," "Generally in and out of prison," "Discharged for drunkenness," "Bears reputation of being a habitual drunkard," "Discharged from work for laziness or losing time" (when there was no evidence of sickness), while a few have been

included in which the home was described as "exceptionally filthy" and the report *also* judged the case to be "generally unsatisfactory."

The evidence consists largely of the reports of the "City Aid" or "C.O.S.," or of reports received by them from employers and others. In a certain number of cases it was impossible to get any information as to character: they were not known to either of these societies. It is therefore probable that the estimate given of the number of cases in which one or other of the parents bears a "bad character" is on the whole less than the facts would warrant if they were more completely known.

SUMMARY OF ALL CLASSES

	Families.	Children.
Class 1. Distress due to lack of employment .	88	235
Class 2. Distress due to sickness or disablement	47	151
Class 3. Incomplete families, father dead, deserted, or in prison	59	150
Class 4. Father in full work	6	21
	200	557

Class I.

Distress due to lack of employment—	Families.
1*a*. Totally unemployed	26
1*b*. On short time	8
1*c*. Permanent casuals	54
	88

Class 1a (Totally Unemployed), 26.

In this class have been placed all those families where the father is bringing in nothing to the family income, and his lack of employment is not (as far as can be seen) due to sickness. Many of these families have been in a better posi-

tion and seem to be the victims of misfortune. In several cases the father has worked for one employer for a number of years and bears a good character from him, but has been thrown out of work by slackness of trade or change in methods. On the other hand, roughly one-third belong really to the permanent casuals; being, however, at the time of the inquiry totally unemployed, they have been included in this class.

The man was discharged from work in two cases "on account of drink," and in two other families the cause of distress is probably the same.

Two families in this class were reported as "living in furnished rooms."

Occupation of Father.

Labourers	7	Window-cleaner	1
Brassfinishers	4	Packer	1
Painters	3	Rag-and-bone gatherer	1
Carters	2	Tin-worker	1
Cycle polisher	1	Moulder	1
Paperhanger	1	Employed at carriage works	1
Brass-caster	1		

Family Incomes[1] *after the Deduction of Rent.*

Income.	Number of Cases.
15*s.* to 16*s.*	1
14*s.* to 15*s.*	1
11*s.* to 12*s.*	1
10*s.* to 11*s.*	2
9*s.* to 10*s.*	1
7*s.* to 8*s.*	1
6*s.* to 7*s.*	1
5*s.* to 6*s.*	1
4*s.* to 5*s.*	1
1*s.* to 2*s.*	3
Under 1*s.*	2
Nothing	11

[1] In every case the family income has been reduced to that for a standard family as explained above.

Class 1b (on Short Time), 8

In this class is included the better type of workers who are generally working for one firm, and who are likely to be working full time during the busy part of the year.

In one case distress was due to drink; the man's wife said he could earn good money if he liked, but he was continually losing time on this account.

One family in this class was reported as "living in furnished rooms."

Occupations of Fathers in this Class

Caster	1	Iron-dresser	1
Gun finisher	1	Kettle-tinner	1
Baker	1	Hinge-dresser	1
Dyer's finisher	1	Labourer	1

Earnings of Fathers

Income.	Number of Cases.
18*s.* to 19*s.*	1
16*s.* to 17*s.*	1
13*s.* to 14*s.*	2
12*s.* to 13*s.*	1
7*s.* to 8*s.*	2
6*s.* to 7*s.*	1

Family Income after Deduction of Rent

Income.	Number of Cases.
17*s.* to 18*s.*	1
13*s.* to 14*s.*	1
11*s.* to 12*s.*	1
10*s.* to 11*s.*	1
9*s.* to 10*s.*	1
6*s.* to 7*s.*	1
2*s.* to 3*s.*	2

Class 1c (Permanent Casuals), 54

This class forms the largest one from which necessitous children are drawn. The home conditions are generally un-

satisfactory; and the number of cases in which character is probably the real reason of distress, is larger in this class than in any other. In some cases the father belonged originally to a skilled trade, but has gradually sunk lower and lower.

Some information as to previous history was obtained in thirty-four cases, and in fourteen of these there was evidence to show that one or other of the parents was a "bad character."

Four families in this class are reported as "living in furnished rooms."

Occupations of Fathers in this Class

Casual labourers	26	Carter	1
Rag-and-bone gatherers	7	Filer	1
Market-porters	5	Carding hooks and eyes	1
Hawkers	3	Lamplighter	1
Boatmen	2	Tube-worker	1
Wood-choppers	2	Tinker	1
Waggon-fitter	1	Bricklayer	1
Motor-fitter	1		

Earnings of Fathers in this Class.

Earnings.	Number of Cases.
16*s.* to 17*s.*	1
14*s.* to 15*s.*	3
12*s.* to 13*s.*	3
11*s.* to 12*s.*	2
10*s.* to 11*s.*	10
9*s.* to 10*s.*	1
8*s.* to 9*s.*	6
7*s.* to 8*s.*	1
6*s.* to 7*s.*	3
5*s.* to 6*s.*	7
4*s.* to 5*s.*	6
3*s.* to 4*s.*	7
2*s.* to 3*s.*	4

Family Incomes in this Class after Deduction of Rent

Income.	Number of Cases.
12*s.* to 13*s.*	4
11*s.* to 12*s.*	3
10*s.* to 11*s.*	2
9*s.* to 10*s.*	5
8*s.* to 9*s.*	4
7*s.* to 8*s.*	7
6*s.* to 7*s.*	4
5*s.* to 6*s.*	6
4*s.* to 5*s.*	2
3*s.* to 4*s.*	4
2*s.* to 3*s.*	3
1*s.* to 2*s.*	2
Under 1*s.*	1
Nothing	7

Class II

	Families.
Distress due to sickness or disablement	47
2*a*. Totally unemployed on account of sickness or disablement	32
2*b*. Partially incapacitated, earnings reduced on account of sickness or disablement	15

In a large number of families in this class distress is due to misfortune. The home conditions are on the whole better than those in Class 1. In four cases, however, there was evidence of "bad character," such as "Been in prison for assault, wife drunken and disreputable," "Home dirty, employer says 'Did not bear the best of characters while in our employ.'" The father was away from the family in the infirmary in 8 cases, in an asylum in 3, in a consumptive sanitorium in 2.

In two cases the disablement was due to an accident, and likely to be temporary.

Nature of Sickness or Disablement

Consumption	13	Typhoid	1
Injury to limb	7	Lead-poisoning	1
Nature not given	7	Rupture	1
Bad eyesight	3	Dropsy	1
Bronchitis	3	Brain affected by heat	1
Lunacy	3	Sciatica	1
Rheumatism	2	Paralysis	1
Heart-disease	2	Operation to thigh	1
Cancer	1		

Occupations of Fathers in this Class

Brass-workers	7	Stamper	1
No occupation	5	Tube-worker	1
Hawkers	4	Frame-fitter	1
Labourers	4	Engraver	1
Moulders	2	Cycle fitter	1
Painters	2	Pen-worker	1
Warehousemen	2	Jeweller	1
Art metal-workers	2	Glass-blower	1
Hatter	1	Pearl-cutter	1
Baker	1	Watchman	1
Boot-repairer	1	Wood-chopper	1
Carter	1	Crossing-sweep	1
Coal-dealer	1	Strip-caster	1
Asphalter	1		

Earnings of Fathers in this Class

Earnings.	Number of Cases.
10*s.* to 11*s.*	2
9*s.* to 10*s.*	2
8*s.* to 9*s.*	1
7*s.* to 8*s.*	1
5*s.* to 6*s.*	3
4*s.* to 5*s.*	2
2*s.* to 3*s.*	1
1*s.* to 2*s.*	2
Nothing	32

Incomes of Families in this Class after Deduction of Rent

Income.	Number of Cases.
19*s.* to 20*s.*	1
15*s.* to 16*s.*	2
14*s.* to 15*s.*	1
13*s.* to 14*s.*	3
12*s.* to 13*s.*	1
11*s.* to 12*s.*	5
10*s.* to 11*s.*	5
9*s.* to 10*s.*	1
8*s.* to 9*s.*	7
7*s.* to 8*s.*	5
6*s.* to 7*s.*	2
5*s.* to 6*s.*	2
4*s.* to 5*s.*	1
3*s.* to 4*s.*	2
2*s.* to 3*s.*	0
1*s.* to 2*s.*	2
Under 1*s.*	1
Nothing	6

CLASS III

Incomplete Families	59
3*a*. Widows	40
3*b*. Deserted wives	5
3*c*. Unmarried women	3
3*d*. Father in prison	8
3*e*. Orphans	3

Class 3a (Widows), 40

This is the second largest class of families from which necessitous children are drawn.

The mothers are wage-earners in nearly every case, although a large number do only casual charing. In twelve cases the family seems to have been in much the same condition before the loss of the father, and his death cannot be the main cause of distress.

Nineteen families in this class are receiving relief from the Guardians. This has been included in estimating family incomes. The relief given is in seventeen cases quite inadequate, the income being in each case below (and some cases very considerably below) Rowntree's standard,[1] 15*s.*, for the standard family for food only. In one case the relief brings the income up to Rowntree's standard, and in one case makes it slightly above.

In four cases the husband bore a "bad character" when he was alive.

Occupation of Mothers in this Class

Charwomen	22	Solderer	1
Pen-workers	3	Polisher	1
Press-workers	3	Nail-cutter	1
Wood-choppers	3	Japanner	1
Paper-box makers	2	Umbrella repairer	1
Brass-workers	2	Sorter	1
Carding	2	Rag-and-bone gatherer	1
Sewing	2	Flower-seller	1
Shopkeeper	1	Occupation not given	1
Wire-worker	1	At home, no earnings	9

Wages of Mother

Earnings.	Number of Cases.
14*s.* to 15*s.*	1
12*s.* to 13*s.*	1
10*s.* to 11*s.*	7
9*s.* to 10*s.*	2
8*s.* to 9*s.*	6
7*s.* to 8*s.*	2
6*s.* to 7*s.*	4
5*s.* to 6*s.*	4
4*s.* to 5*s.*	6
3*s.* to 4*s.*	4
2*s.* to 3*s.*	5
1*s.* to 2*s.*	7

[1] See Rowntree, *Poverty*, p. 110.

Family Income in this Class after the Deduction of Rent

Income.	Number of Cases.
16*s.* to 17*s.*	15
15*s.* to 16*s.*	3
14*s.* to 15*s.*	1
13*s.* to 14*s.*	5
12*s.* to 13*s.*	3
11*s.* to 12*s.*	3
10*s.* to 11*s.*	2
9*s.* to 10*s.*	4
8*s.* to 9*s.*	13
7*s.* to 8*s.*	2
6*s.* to 7*s.*	4
5*s.* to 6*s.*	5
4*s.* to 5*s.*	2
3*s.* to 4*s.*	1
2*s.* to 3*s.*	0
1*s.* to 2*s.*	1
Under 1*s.*	2
Nothing	1

CLASS IV

Father in full work 6

In five of these cases distress may be said to be due to an abnormally large family. In the other the man is only earning 12*s.* a week, but the employer says he is only doing a girl's work and is being kept on out of charity; the mother in this family is in prison.

Father's Occupation

Labourers . . . . 2 Painter 1
Carters 3

Father's Earnings

Earnings.	Number of Cases.
£1	4
18*s.*	1
12*s.*	1

Family Income after Deduction of Rent

Income.	Number of Cases.
14*s.* to 15*s.*	1
13*s.* to 14*s.*	4
7*s.* to 8*s.*	1

SUMMARIES

Summary of Family Incomes[1] *after Deduction of Rent for all the* 200 *Families*

Income.	Number of Cases.
19*s.* to £1	1
18*s.* to 19*s.*	0
17*s.* to 18*s.*	1
16*s.* to 17*s.*	5
15*s.* to 16*s.*	6
14*s.* to 15*s.*	4
13*s.* to 14*s.*	13
12*s.* to 13*s.*	8
11*s.* to 12*s.*	13
10*s.* to 11*s.*	12
9*s.* to 10*s.*	12
8*s.* to 9*s.*	24
7*s.* to 8*s.*	16
6*s.* to 7*s.*	14
5*s.* to 6*s.*	14
4*s.* to 5*s.*	6
3*s.* to 4*s.*	7
2*s.* to 3*s.*	5
1*s.* to 2*s.*	8
Under 1*s.*	6
Nothing[2]	25

In 187 families the income was below Rowntree's standard for the maintenance of physical efficiency in times of health.

The occupations of the chief bread-winners were so various

[1] Calculated as explained above, pp. 45–6.

[2] This means that any money coming in would be swallowed by rent if it were paid. In most cases the families are pawning or selling furniture.

that it is difficult to make a simple summary. The four occupations with the largest number of workers were:—

Labourers	40
Odd jobs	38
Charwomen	21
Metal-workers	20

"Odd jobs" include rag-and-bone collectors, hawkers, wood-choppers, market-porters, watchmen, &c.

In forty-eight cases out of the 200 investigated there was evidence of "bad character."[1] In four more cases distress was due to the man deserting his wife, although there was no evidence of his being otherwise a "bad character."

B. We now turn to the circumstances of forty-three families where there are children on behalf of whom applications have been received but not granted.

These families are those where there are children attending one or other of the ten schools selected for the investigation. Applications had been received on their behalf during the month of February 1912, but had not been granted, the reasons being: "the parents said not required," 13 cases; "over scale," 2 cases; "parents failed to appear before the Committee," 28 cases.

Parents said not required.—It was not possible to obtain particulars as to family income or father's occupation and earnings in the thirteen cases where the parent told the attendance officer that "the meals were not required." The following notes, however, may give some idea of the family's position, and the reason why it was thought the children needed food:—

Case 1.—Teacher sent in application; father was in prison. When attendance officer made his visit, father was out of prison and about to begin work.

[1] For explanation of what is meant by this, see pp. 46–7.

Case 2.—Teacher made application, because the children were sent to school without food. When officer visited, the mother said she had not asked for meals, and she did not wish the children to have them.

Case 3.—Father, a carter, ill, and out of regular work for some time. One child going to open-air school. Family were ten in number (=7.75 adults), and income after deduction of rent was 12*s.*

Case 4.—Mother applied to teacher, but when officer visited she said meals were not required.

Case 5.—Teacher applied. Father out of work, and mother in the infirmary.

Case 6.—Teacher applied. Father away. Mother not getting sufficient food.

Case 7.—Mother applied and said father was out of work. Officer found he was a hawker making a small weekly income. Family eight in number (=6.75 adults); income after deduction of rent, 10*s.* 6*d.*

Case 8.—Teacher sent in application. When officer visited, parent said, "Meals are not required."

Case 9.—Father now in work. Meals not required.

Case 10.—Father a labourer; seven in family (=6.75 adults); income after deducting rent, 6*s.* 3*d.* When officer visited, mother said meals were not required. Case known to C.O.S. Home very dirty and terribly poor. Practically no furniture. Father (boatman) appears to work very irregularly.

Case 11.—Teacher sent in application. Child used to have breakfasts, but had had none for last fortnight.

Case 12.—Teacher sent in application. When officer visited, parent said meals were not required. Living in a very low quarter.

Case 13.—Teacher sent in application, saying, "This boy is being repeatedly sent to school without food; father on short time." When officer visited, parent said, "Meals not wanted." Father is working full time.

Over Scale.—Two cases were refused because the income was over the scale allowed.

Case 1.—Teacher sent in application. Mother cards hooks and eyes. Father a pen-worker. Said he was earning 18*s.* 6*d.* (on

application to employer, wages as given in wages book were found to be 25*s.*). Family five in number (=4 adults). Income after deduction of rent was 23*s.* 6*d.* Employer said man was reputed among his shopmates to be a bit of a gambler, but he could not say if this were true.

Case 2.—Mother a widow, one child. Boy looks dreadfully ill: he had body vermin when examined at medical inspection. Mother, a pen-worker, earns 13*s.* 6*d.* a week; rent 3*s.* 6*d.* Cannot account for child's looks if not due to neglect. Mother says she does her best for child, and seems fond of him. Cannot make case out.

Non-appearance.—Twenty-eight cases were not granted because the parents failed to appear before the Committee.

In two of these cases the family were out when the attendance officer visited, and therefore no particulars as to income were obtained. In both instances the teacher had sent in the application, giving as the reason that the child did not get sufficient food.

The remaining twenty-six cases have been classified according to what appeared to be the main causes of distress, and have been treated in the same way as the families in the first part of this inquiry.

SUMMARY OF CLASSES

Class 1. Lack of employment . . .	19
Class 2*b*. Sickness	1
Class 3*b*. Deserted wives	2
Class 4. Father in full work . . .	4
	26

Class I

Distress due to lack of employment . .	19
1*a*. Totally unemployed	8
1*b*. On short time	1
1*c*. Permanent casuals	10

Class 1a (Totally Unemployed), 8

In six of these cases the application was sent in by the teacher on his own initiative.

In one case the father had been in prison for neglecting to pay a fine imposed by Education Committee. Later he was found to have left home and was living with another woman. The member of Committee wrote across the case, "Get father's address and proceed against him under Children's Act, if necessary." This was in October. The teacher sent in another application in November, and again in December. On each occasion the father failed to appear. In February the case was among those not granted, and nothing had been done.

In another case the father, a bricklayer's labourer, said it was only the weather that prevented him from working. When in full work he could earn 23*s.* a week.

Class 1b (On Short Time), 1

Man an iron-polisher. Selling furniture to buy food.

Class 1c (Permanent Casuals), 10

The families in this class seem to be in much the same condition as those families where there are children receiving meals.

Class 2b (Partially Incapacitated through Sickness), 1

There is only one family in this class. They are well known to the C.O.S. The man is consumptive, and only able to work short shifts in consequence. Everything in pawn, even bedclothes. Guardians say, "Man unreliable, woman persevering." Case known to N.S.P.C.C. Baby

has been ill with diphtheria. When visitor called, woman was out cleaning and man was looking after baby, who looked wretchedly ill and badly nourished.

Class 3b (Deserted Wives), 2

In one of these cases the children had been having breakfasts on and off for a year. When the case came up for renewal the mother did not appear, therefore meals were stopped.

In the other case the mother refused to appear, because she feared that if she did the authorities would find her husband and punish him. He has been in prison three times for neglecting to pay her the allowance order. Each time when he comes out he smashes everything in the home, and gives her such a bad time that she simply dare not apply. Case has been known to C.O.S. and Women's Settlement for a long time.

Class 4 (Father in Full Work), 4

Case 1.—Man was summoned because his children did not attend school regularly. He came to court drunk.
Case 2.—Man earning £1 a week, rent 3*s*. Six in family.
Case 3.—Employer given by man not known. Income, after deduction of rent, 15*s*. Seven in family (= 5.25 adults).
Case 4.—Eleven in family (= 8.5 adults). Income, after deduction of rent, 16*s*. 3*d*.

Occupations of Fathers in Twenty-six Families where Meals were not granted because Parent failed to appear

Labourers	8	Iron-polisher	1
Cycle-workers	2	Range-fitter	1
Hawkers	2	Railway goods checker	1
Rag-and-bone collectors	2	Carpenter	1
Casual porters	2	Charing	1
Not given	2	Carding	1
Motor-worker	1	Window-cleaner	1

Family Incomes after Deduction of Rent

Income.	Number of Cases.
16*s.* to 17*s.*	2
15*s.* to 16*s.*	2
14*s.* to 15*s.*	2
13*s.* to 14*s.*	1
12*s.* to 13*s.*	1
11*s.* to 12*s.*	1
10*s.* to 11*s.*	2
9*s.* to 10*s.*	2
8*s.* to 9*s.*	1
7*s.* to 8*s.*	1
6*s.* to 7*s.*	2
5*s.* to 6*s.*	2
2*s.* to 3*s.*	2
under 1*s.*	1
nothing	6

Although the small number of families investigated cannot justify an absolutely positive assertion, I think it may fairly be concluded that, on the whole, they are representative of most of the families whose applications are not granted, and that the home circumstances of these families are much the same as those of the families whose applications have been granted.

CHAPTER VII

EFFECTS OF THE MEALS

(a) *Effects on the Child: Physical, Mental, and Social*

THERE is at present little information of a definite kind to show how far children have benefited physically by the meals.

The question of nutrition is receiving more and more attention at school medical inspections; and as time goes on we may know more, both of the extent to which malnutrition exists and of the value of the work done under the Provision of Meals Act in remedying this condition. What evidence there is at present is chiefly based upon—

(1) Experiments made by school doctors who have weighed and measured small numbers of selected children, before and during the time they were receiving school meals.

(2) Impressions, based in most cases upon the opinions of teachers, as to changes in the general appearance and carriage of the children.

One of the most interesting experiments, perhaps, was that made by Dr. Crowley at Bradford.[1] Forty children were fed five days a week for five months, being chosen from those apparently most in need of meals. They were weighed three times during the five weeks preceding the starting of the meals, in order to allow for normal variations in weight, seasonal or otherwise.

[1] See Report made by Dr. Crowley in 1907.

Sixty-nine "control children," as comparable as possible with those being fed, except that they did not receive the school meals, were chosen from the same school as the "experiment children," and from two adjacent schools where the poverty conditions were similar.

It was found that the "control children" gained an average of an ounce a week, while the children receiving meals made a gain of 6 oz. for the first four weeks: no gain was made during the fifth week, but averages of $5\frac{1}{2}$ oz. and $4\frac{1}{2}$ oz. gain respectively were made during the sixth and seventh weeks.

During the Whitsuntide holidays no meals were given; and it was found, when weighing the children on their return, that the "experiment children" had lost on an average 1 lb., while the "control children" (who had not received school meals before the holidays) had gained an average of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. It took nearly a fortnight to make up for the holiday. The effects of the summer holidays were similar. The "control children" gained on an average 13 oz. during the four weeks, while the "experiment children" lost on an average 1 lb.

Both breakfasts and dinners were given, the breakfasts consisting of porridge, milk, and treacle, followed by bread and margarine or dripping, with milk to drink. The dinners varied from day to day and consisted of two courses—soup, fish or meat pies, vegetarian dishes and a pudding, the cost coming out at from 1*d.* to $1\frac{3}{4}$*d.* a head.

The results of the experiment showed fairly conclusively that the meals had a very beneficial effect on the children, both as regards gain in weight and in general appearance. It also showed that the children rapidly lost ground when the meals were stopped in the holidays.

Another experiment was made at Sheffield.[1] Three sets

[1] See Report of the School Medical Officer for 1910.

of children were weighed—one consisting of children fed at home, and the other two of those fed at school. The first school set were given a breakfast of porridge, treacle, milk, and bread and dripping. The second one of cocoa and bread and dripping, or jam.

The children fed at home were from a slightly better class ; but both sets of school-fed children came from equally poor homes. The gain in weight per boy per week worked out as follows :—

Home breakfast boys . . .	2.09 oz.
Cocoa „ „ . . .	1.58 „
Porridge „ „ . . .	3·31 „

In Northampton[1] 44 children receiving school meals (breakfasts and dinners), and 40 children coming from a similar class, but fed at home, were observed for a period of 14 weeks.

The funds for providing the food were given by a private donor, but the meals were otherwise similar to those provided under the Act. The children to receive the meals were finally chosen by a medical examination, in which age, height, weight, nutrition, general health and cleanliness were considered.

At the beginning of the experiment the average weight of the children fed was 1.71 kilogrammes (3.75 lb.) less than that of the children who were not given meals. During the second week the average gain of the fed children was greater than that of the others ; while during the Easter holidays, when no meals were supplied, there was a loss in the case of the fed children and a gain in the case of the others. At the close of the experiment the average

[1] See Report on the Working of the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1909, p. 14.

weight of the school-fed children was only 1.02 kilogrammes (2.24 lb.) less than that of the others.

The great majority of teachers are of opinion that the children who have received the school meals have physically improved: a few are unable to testify to any difference, but it must be remembered that in some cases the meals have been given at times of temporary distress and were therefore intended merely to maintain the child's normal health.

While it is difficult to say definitely how far the meals have improved the physique of the children, it is still more difficult to say how far the latter have shown mental improvement and are better able to take "full advantage of the education provided for them."

The Board of Education have issued circulars asking for information from local authorities as to their opinion on this subject, and also as to the extent to which the conduct and manners of the children have improved by the methods of service and discipline employed. In a large number of cases the answers[1] have been a general statement to the effect that improvement was shown; some authorities, however, have given numerous quotations from the opinions of the teachers. In nearly every case they are agreed that the children's general appearance is brighter and that they enter into their work with more zest.

A few authorities have dwelt upon the fact that the meals have increased the regularity of attendance and thus promoted the education of the children, while others have suggested that their improved physical condition makes them less likely to stay at home for trifling ailments.

[1] See Report on the Working of the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1909, p. 15.

The improvement in manners naturally varies very much according to the amount and kind of supervision provided. In some cases the good educational effects appear to be decidedly marked, but in others things are not yet what might be desired, and on the whole H.M. Inspectors are of the opinion that there is room for much more to be done in this direction.

In conclusion, I think it may be said that the physical effects on the children are very satisfactory. The mental effects are more difficult to judge, but there is a general opinion that the children do show an improvement. The effects on manners are, on the whole, perhaps not so marked as they might be.

(b) *Effects on the Family: Economic and Social*

Unfortunately the effects on the child are not the only effects that may be produced by the provision of public meals. The child is part of the family and cannot be dissociated from it.

One of the most serious economic evils that may be produced is the supplementing of wages by relief. Public relief may enable the principal bread-winner of a family to work for a lower wage, or to work fewer days in the week for his present daily wage if he is a casual worker.

The amount of exertion a man will expend depends largely upon his "standard of life"—*i.e.* the supply of necessaries, conveniences, and luxuries sufficient to satisfy his desires: if his standard is a low one and his requirements are met by three days' work, he will not work four.

That in many cases this standard is a low one is shown by the fact that although it is only too obvious to an

observer that all is not well with many children on whose behalf the teachers have sent in application for meals, the parents often do not see it, and in many cases it is most difficult to convince them that anything is wrong. This statement is borne out by the large number of parents who tell the attendance officer that they do not want the meals for their children, or who fail to appear when asked to meet the Committee.

A similar difficulty is experienced when trying to get medical treatment for children from the poorest homes. On her first visit a Care Committee visitor is nearly always told that nothing is wrong with the child, and it is only by repeated talks that she can convince the parent of what is so very patent to her own eyes.

If we supply a necessary of life and do not at the same time raise the parent's standard of what constitutes necessaries, he will relax his own efforts in many cases, and the family income will fall. If he is content to work for a lower wage, the employer will be the only person benefited by our provision, and the child, who is the object of our care, will remain untouched, or may even be in a worse position in the end than at the beginning.

Such is the opinion of many to-day; and the experience of the "Allowance System" of a century ago seems to them to have been disregarded. Undoubtedly here and there the effects feared have actually taken place. Mr. Pepler, Organiser of the L.C.C. Care Committees, in his paper read before the Conference for the Prevention of Destitution, quotes several cases that have come within his knowledge and affirms that "there are hundreds like them." One quoted by him was that of a printer's labourer, who after a strike went back to work for 21*s.*, although his former wages had been 24*s.* When asked how he managed to

live he replied, "I couldn't, except that the kids get fed at school and the missis gets a day's charing." Such cases can be multiplied from one's own experience. That they are by no means uncommon in other parts of the country may be shown from the following cases quoted by correspondents to the *School Child*. The first is that of a father who earns 15*s*. a week as a milk boy, and has accepted this wage for eight years; his children have had free breakfasts and dinners at school all the time. The second, that of a mother (widow), in regular work, who earns 8*s*. 9*d*. a week; one daughter (16) earns 6*s*. 6*d*.; three other children of school age are all receiving meals. The firm employing this woman is well known and of old standing. In the summer during the strike time the employees all came out and went back for the same money.[1]

The selected children, however, came, in a large number of cases, from homes where the wage-earning capacity of the chief bread-winner was below normal, not on account of his own lack of effort, but on account of sickness or misfortune. Where the mother is a widow she can hardly be expected to support a large family unaided; and nearly half the widows whose children were given meals in Birmingham were already in receipt of poor relief.

In the chapter on "Methods of Selection," reference was made to the opinion of some that the meals should be open to all children who liked to come, and that selection and discrimination should be abolished. It may be pointed out here that one of the great dangers of such a course would be a slackening of parents' efforts, and even a general lowering of wages.

It may be useful to try and estimate how far these dangers have made themselves felt in Birmingham.

[1] See *School Child*, December 1911.

Of the 200 families whose circumstances were inquired into :—

In 26 cases the father was totally unemployed.
„ 8 „ „ „ „ on short time.
„ 54 „ „ „ „ a permanent casual.
„ 47 „ „ „ „ partially or totally incapacitated by sickness.
„ 59 „ „ „ „ dead, or living away from home.
„ 6 „ „ „ „ in full work.

I think it may be fairly inferred that the number of men in regular work who will accept work for a low wage on account of the meals given to their children is a very small one. On the other hand, there may be a certain number of "casual workers" who are encouraged by this relief to work fewer days in the week.

The average income of these 200 families after the deduction of rent was between 8*s.* and 9*s.*, to support a family of 2 parents and 4 children (= 5 adults).[1] This is hardly sufficient to supply the needs of the lowest "standard of life," so there does not seem much danger of supplementing the family income to the extent of encouraging the parents to slacken their own efforts.

Another effect of the provision of free meals that should be considered is the effect on poor law relief. Some are of the opinion that as free meals are granted without the disqualification attached to poor relief, they should only be granted to families who are able to stand without its help.[2] On the other hand, it must be remembered that out-relief granted to widows is nearly always inadequate.

The first principle of selection is the need of the child; and the children of widows in receipt of out-relief are often

[1] See Chapter VI, on the method of reducing incomes to a common denominator.

[2] See Edith Neville, *Assistance of School Children* (1911), p. 7.

those who need feeding most. It is true that relief should, if possible, be administered by one authority only to avoid overlapping: the system adopted at Bradford for this reason seems a wise solution of the difficulty. There an arrangement has been arrived at between the Guardians and the Education Committee under which children of widows who apply for out-relief are given school meals as part of that relief. The cost is paid by the Guardians. In 1911 they paid over £196 in this way to the Education Committee. Huddersfield has adopted a similar system.

Secondly, there are what may be called the social effects on the family to be considered. Will not the parent feel less responsibility for his child when the State undertakes to feed him? Will not the school meal do away with the home meal or make it still more unsatisfactory? Is it possible to permanently benefit the child except by acting through the home?

The answer seems to be that if the home conditions are bad they are not likely to become better unless something is done. The school meals may weaken home-ties if we rely on them alone to remove the child's necessity; but, if they are made an opportunity of getting into touch with these unsatisfactory homes and of bringing sympathetic yet firm influences to bear upon them, the home standard may be raised and the benefit to the child become a permanent reality. The machinery set in motion by the administration of the Education (Provision of Meals) Act of 1906 has provided a means of discovering some of the worst cases of neglect and of bringing criminally neglectful parents to book. The Children's Act has now supplied the necessary power for dealing with such cases by making it an offence to fail to provide, or take steps to procure, adequate food for a child, or young person, to the extent of causing him unnecessary suffering or injury

to health. What is still needed is a means of influencing the very much larger class of the well-intentioned but ignorant and apathetic parents. The power of recovery of cost from parents who can afford to pay and yet fail to provide for their children is a very valuable one, and it has perhaps not been enforced to the extent that it should be. Of still more value is the opening of parents' eyes to their responsibilities by talks and persuasion. Compulsion may only irritate, but if the parent once sees the necessity of the efforts made to benefit his children nine-tenths of the battle is won.

In this way the meals may be a means of awakening and enforcing parental responsibility where it is already weak. But there is still another side to the picture. How many are there who are only too acutely conscious of the needs of their children, who struggle on year in and year out to maintain them in some state of efficiency? There are mothers who half starve themselves that their children may be fed. We now believe, with Mr. Reginald Bray, that by insuring a minimum of opportunity for the poorest we may save some of these mothers from giving up the struggle in despair, and that we may increase rather than diminish family ties by making them more possible. "Parental responsibility means something more than a knowledge of a parent's duties; it requires for its realisation a possibility of their fulfilment. Nothing demoralises a man more rapidly and more completely than the knowledge of a duty coupled with the knowledge that that duty cannot be performed."[1]

[1] Reginald Bray, *The Town Child.*

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSIONS

We have seen that in official opinion the Act of 1906 "furnishes unrivalled opportunities for mitigating some of the deepest physical injuries that beset the children of the rising generation."[1] If, however, the organisation for administering the provision of meals is incorporated into the vast mass of social enterprise that is now working for the benefit of the child, it may do more than mitigate, it may help in no small measure to remove these ills. The Care Committees[2] were an outcome of the scheme for the provision of meals, and were first intended merely as organisations for administering it; but they have gone much further. They have sought for the causes of these physical injuries; and the removal of such causes is far better than the mitigation of their evil effects.

The keynote of modern social effort is co-operation between official and voluntary action. In the first place to secure a knowledge of the disabilities that beset certain sections of the people, and then a knowledge of the most suitable person or agency to remove those disabilities.

The school meal is permanently beneficial in proportion to the extent to which it is used to meet the real need of the children on whose behalf it is provided. No two homes are exactly alike, no two children are exactly alike, and the solution of the problem of the ill-nourished child is only

[1] Circular 552 issued by the Board of Education.
[2] See above, p. 11.

to be found in the discovery of the cause of his condition and the application of a suitable remedy.

The school organisation seems to be the best for discovering the existence of the need, but it is doubtful if it is the most suitable for discovering its cause. It is clearly impossible for the teacher to visit the homes of all the children; and it is almost as clear that the attendance officer is not the right person to discover the cause of malnutrition. He has little specialised knowledge of health or of home economy, both of which most important qualifications are possessed by the health visitor who, undoubtedly, is the most suitable person to carry out such duties. It is sometimes argued that the attendance officer must have a better knowledge of the homes than any other official because he is always in and out on his other duties; but the health visitor, in addition to her other qualifications, is also constantly in the poorer homes where neglected or dirty children are most frequently found.

The line of advance in the future is undoubtedly further co-operation between the School Medical Service and the Canteen Committees.

In 1909 and 1910 the Board of Education issued its reports on the working of the Provisions of Meals Act in separate pamphlets; in 1911, however, the report formed a section of the report of the Chief Medical Officer. The latter stated that he was convinced that, "any work which a local Education Authority can usefully do to combat malnutrition must be done as a branch of their medical work; and that on grounds of science as well as of convenience, the provision of meals must, as far as possible, be effectively connected with the machinery of the School Medical Service."

It is hardly to be expected that specialists in education

can be at the same time specialists in the administration of relief. A knowledge of the conditions of employment, of rates of wages, and of the difficulties of life in slum streets, needs different training to the training of an educationalist ; and it is probable that in the future the Canteen Committees will be more representative bodies and will consist of members of the Boards of Guardians and of various philanthropic societies, as well as of members of the Education Committees.

The system of selecting children entirely by way of a fixed poverty scale is almost a necessity if the selecting committee are not specialists in relief administration and have little knowledge of the conditions of life among the families with which they are dealing. We have seen, however, that this system excludes a number of children who, by reason of unfortunate home circumstances, are in a worse position than those fed; and it is only by a consideration of each case on its own merits, and by taking special circumstances into account, that the full benefit to all ill-nourished children can be obtained. Personal influence in the home is one of the most important factors in securing better conditions for the child, and, on this account, some provision for utilising voluntary help is most useful. It must not be imagined that the official, because he is an official, is lacking in sympathy or interest ; nevertheless, he must necessarily lose in some directions by his official capacity, although he may gain in others. He is responsible for his actions to a controlling authority, and it is his business to carry out their directions ; he is generally very busy and cannot spend indefinite time and trouble on each individual case ; while the volunteer is more efficient if he concentrates on two or three families, and the extent of his usefulness is only limited by his own zeal. The official can as a rule only influence the family in

one direction ; the volunteer can make use of a whole army of agencies, official and voluntary, to help him in his work. A foundation of smoothly working regular machinery is necessary, but the help of the volunteer worker, in original and even unexpected ways, is also of great importance.

A system in which the original notification of ill-nourished children comes from the teacher, school doctor, or any other interested person ; in which the first investigations are made by a trained official, who has a sound knowledge of health principles and the home economy required in the poorest areas ; and in which subsequent visiting is done by a volunteer who has the help of the knowledge of family circumstances already gained by the official, provides for everything. It is only with the help of such a system that the great opportunities provided by the Act of 1906 can be fully made use of. Throughout it must be borne in mind that the meals are a means to an end, and not an end in themselves. They are made necessary by the unsatisfactory conditions at present prevailing ; but the ideal meal will only be found when the homes are properly ordered and the parents have been put in a position to realise their responsibilities. The greatest danger, perhaps, of a public provision of free meals is that they act as a salve to the conscience of the community who see the children being fed, and, thinking all is well, look no further. The meals themselves are only a palliative ; the real solution of the problem of the ill-nourished child can only come very slowly with more knowledge and better conditions in the homes, with proper provision for times of sickness and for widowhood, and with some solution of the problem of unemployment.

APPENDIX A

TYPICAL MENUS. DINNER

BRADFORD.—Cost 1.29*d.* per head.[1]

First Week.

Monday . .	Potato and onion soup. Rice pudding.
Tuesday . .	Cottage pie. Greens. Stewed fruit.
Wednesday .	Pea-soup. Plum cake.
Thursday . .	Meat and potato hash. Beans. Stewed fruit.
Friday . . .	Fish and potato pie. Peas. Parsley sauce. Rice and currants.

Second Week.

Monday . .	Brown vegetable soup. Sago pudding.
Tuesday . .	Shepherd's pie. Peas. Stewed fruit.
Wednesday .	Yorkshire pudding. Gravy. Greens. Rice and sultanas.
Thursday . .	Scotch barley broth. Fruit tart.
Friday . . .	Fish and potato pie. Peas. Parsley sauce. Blancmange and stewed fruit.

Third Week.

Monday . .	Potato and onion soup. Rice pudding.
Tuesday . .	Savoury batter. Beans and gravy. Stewed fruit.
Wednesday .	Pea-soup. Baked jam-roll.
Thursday . .	Stewed beef, gravy, mashed potatoes. Stewed fruit.
Friday . . .	Fish and potato pie. Peas. Parsley sauce. Ground-rice pudding.

[1] In each case the cost is for provisions only; the cost of administration is not included.

Fourth Week.

Monday . .	Brown vegetable soup. Wholemeal cake.
Tuesday . .	Cottage pie. Greens. Rice and sultanas.
Wednesday .	Potato and onion soup. Currant pastry.
Thursday . .	Shepherd's pie. Beans. Stewed fruit.
Friday . . .	Fish and potato pie. Peas. Parsley sauce. Blancmange and stewed fruit.

LIVERPOOL.—Cost 1½*d.* per head.

Meals supplied by British Workman's Public House Co.

Monday . .	Mutton broth and a slice of bread.
Tuesday . .	Scouse and a slice of bread.
Wednesday .	Pea-soup or mutton broth, and a slice of bread.
Thursday . .	Scouse and a slice of bread.
Friday . . .	College pudding and a bun, or boiled rice and a bun, or if preferred same as other days.

Meals supplied by League of Welldoers.

Monday . .	Pea-soup, steamed potatoes, and currant bread.
Tuesday . .	Irish stew, plain bread and jam.
Wednesday .	Green pea-soup. Steamed potatoes. Rice.
Thursday . .	Irish stew. Plain bread and currant bread.
Friday . . .	Pea and fish soup. Steamed potatoes. Bread and jam.

MANCHESTER.—Cost per head 1*d.*

Monday . .	Pea-soup and bread.
Tuesday . .	Hot-pot and bread.
Wednesday .	Suet pudding and treacle.
Thursday . .	Irish stew.
Friday . . .	Hot milk. Bread and jam, or bread and cheese.

BRISTOL.—Cost per head .86*d.*

Monday . .	Vegetable soup and bread dumplings.
Tuesday . .	Rice and milk. Bread and butter.
Wednesday .	Irish stew. Vegetables and bread.
Thursday . .	Stewed beef and peas. Bread.
Friday . . .	Boiled fish and parsley sauce.

APPENDIX B

TYPICAL CASES FROM THE INQUIRY

In each class one example is given where character is probably a cause of distress, and one where character is reported good.

CLASS 1.—*Father Totally Unemployed*

Example 1.—Father, a painter, out of work. Mother dead. Grandmother, aged 69, lives with family. 5 children, eldest 14, baby 1 year, girl of 8 is a cripple. No income was coming into the house at the time of the inquiry, rent was 4*s.* 6*d.* Family known to the City Aid in 1907. Mother then ill, wanting doctor and food. £2 rent owing, everything sold or pawned except bed, no food or coal. Employer reported the man was honest, sober, and industrious; had worked for him thirty years on and off, in between he did fourteen years in the navy. Man used to earn 28*s.* a week; had been out of work one month in 1907.

Example 2.—Father, a tin worker, used to earn 25*s.*, but was discharged through intemperate habits. 4 children, 2 at school. Boy, a printer, gives 5*s.*, girl in jewellery trade gives 5*s.* 6*d.*, mother earns occasionally by sewing. Family well known to C.O.S. and City Aid. Mother very persevering, children delicate; one has gastric catarrh, another has had operation for adenoids. Man found drunk by visitor several times.

CLASS 1*b*.—*Father on Short Time*

Example 1.—Father, a baker, on short time, wages 13*s.* for half a week. Eight in family, 6 children. Rent 4*s.* 6*d.* Family known to City Aid. Used to earn 28*s.* at last place, but left on account of slackness. Employer gives a good character. Visitor reports, "Family have kept going by pawning things." They appear very respectable people, and are total abstainers. House clean and tidy, no food.

Example 2.—Father, a gun-finisher, averaged 13*s.* 5½*d.* for last four weeks. Eight in family. Boy of 14 earns 5*s.* as errand-boy.

Rent 3*s.* 9*d.*, and 1*s.* 3*d.* for man's workshop. Family known to City Aid and Settlement. Man, an outworker, can earn 40*s.*, less expenses, when full time; not been busy for eighteen months. Has bad drinking bouts; wife says he could earn good money if he liked.

Class 1*c.*—*Permanent Casuals*

Example 1.—Father, a casual labourer, averages 5*s.* Eight in family. Mother cards hooks and eyes, 1*s.* 6*d.* Girl of 17 is a lathe-worker, gives 7*s.* Boy of 15, a polisher, gives 6*s.* 6*d.* Rent 4*s.* 6*d.* Family known to C.O.S. Woman looks very worn, says carding makes her back ache terribly; she has had ten children. House only fairly neat and clean, but woman not fit to do much.

Example 2.—Father, a casual labourer, does wood-chopping most of his time, and makes 10*s.* a week. Eight in family. Mother minds a baby for which she gets 1*s.* 6*d.* Rent 5*s.* Family known to C.O.S., City Aid, and other charitable societies. People bear very bad character, never legally married, and given to drink. Man has been in prison for assaulting the police. Always getting relief from charitable people, sometimes gives false name. Man was ill in 1904, then parish helped. Attendance officer says he always finds father by the fire, and is under the impression that he is lazy. Children first fed in January 1911. Father left family in July. Came back in October; family then in furnished rooms.

Class 2*a.*—*Father Totally Incapacitated by Sickness or Disablement*

Example 1.—Father, a brass-dresser, can't work at all owing to bronchial asthma; wife does a little washing sometimes. Guardians giving 14*s.* out-relief. Eight in family, no children at work. Rent 4*s.* 2*d.* Family known to City Aid in 1908; man had then been ill some time. Average earnings 8*s.* £2 rent owing. Employer said man most willing and deserves helping. Used to earn £1 when in good health.

Example 2.—Man, a frame-fitter, had accident at works, getting 9*s.* compensation. Mother and daughter both hawk flowers—make 8*s.* between them. Another girl at work is a polisher, brings in 5*s.* Eight in family. Family known to City Aid; when they applied in 1908 home was absolutely destitute; pawned all worth pawning. Employer said man did not then bear the best of characters. No chance of re-employment. Mother very voluble woman. Have been reported to N.S.P.C.C.

Class 2*b*.—*Father Partially Incapacitated by Sickness or Disablement*

Example 1.—Father, now a hawker, earns about 2*s*.; used to be a brass-turner, worked for four years at 21*s*., but has consumption and heart-disease. Mother does charing and cards hooks and eyes, earns 7*s*. Rent 1*s*. 9*d*. Six in family. Known to City Aid, who strongly recommend father to go into infirmary and let the children go to Marston Green Poor Law Homes.

Example 2.—Father used to be a caster's moulder and earned 27*s*., but had to leave on account of illness, not strong enough for work. Now chops and hawks wood, makes about 7*s*. 6*d*.; wife a polisher, earns 10*s*. Rent 4*s*. 3*d*. Five in family. Woman has to pay 3*s*. a week to neighbour for minding the baby. Home very bare, but man is full of go, and does his very best. One child delicate.

Class 3*a*.—*Widows*

Example 1.—Mother, a widow, cards hooks and eyes and safety-pins, at which she makes about 2*s*. One boy at work brings in 5*s*. 6*d*. Guardians give 9*s*. and 1*s*. 6*d*. in food. Seven in family. Rent 5*s*. Father was a polisher, used to earn 21*s*., had pneumonia. Family known to City Aid and to Church.

Example 2.—Mother a widow, boy of 10 sells *Mails*, earns average of 3*s*. Guardians give 3*s*. 6*d*. and 1*s*. 10*d*. in food. Rent 4*s*. Three in family. Family known to C.O.S. Father was in chandelier trade, got lead-poisoning. Rooms far from clean, and poorly furnished. Eldest son in gaol, 1906. Daughter also been in gaol several times. Visitor suspected that gambling and drink were indulged in.

Class 3*b* and *c*.—*Deserted Wives and Unmarried Women*

Example 1.—Mother hawks firewood and makes 7*s*. Two children. Rent 3*s*. Furnished rooms. Husband a carter, deserted wife. Known to City Aid in 1908. Man had then done no regular work for two years, earned 26*s*. in last place. Employer knew very little about him; he left on his own account.

Example 2.—Mother, japanner, earns 10*s*. Three children. Old woman lodges with them and looks after the baby. Rent 4*s*. 6*d*. Husband (not married legally) deserted in January 1911; warrant out against him, but he hasn't been found. Neighbours help with food, also girls at woman's shop. Boy, 10, earns 3*d*. weekly by knocking up neighbours. House damp, fairly tidy, but very poor and dismal.

Class 3*d*.—*Father in Prison*

Example 1.—Mother and five children, two eldest at work earn 9*s*. between them. Rent 3*s*. 6*d*. Family known to C.O.S. in 1898. People then had a bad character, always in poverty, both man and wife addicted to drink, but man is worst of two; both arrested for assault three months ago, and the man got one month hard labour. Man a paviour, but has done casual work for many years. House fairly clean.

Example 2.—Father in prison. Mother and girl living in lodgings. Little food given by friends. Family known to C.O.S. and City Aid. Man a coach-painter's labourer. Wife a dressmaker, and delicate. House very poor, but very clean. Wants to get a separation order. Man's failing is a fondness for drink, otherwise a good husband, and by no means rough. Man left employer, who gave an unsatisfactory character, hinted at dishonesty. Averaged 20*s*. to 23*s*. N.S.P.C.C. gave grocery in January 1912.

Class 3*e*.—*Orphans*

Example 1.—Boy, an orphan, adopted by grandmother, who is bedridden and gets old-age pension; the two live on this. Rent 3*s*. 6*d*. Attendance officer says, "Seems a very deserving case." Uncle and aunt lived with family in December 1910; more income was coming in then.

Class 4.—*Father in Full Work*

Example 1.—Man, a furniture remover, earns 18*s*. Four children. Rent 4*s*. 6*d*. House and wife very dirty.

Example 2.—Father, a labourer, earns £1. Large family, seven children. Eldest girl, 16, has St. Vitus' dance, works when she can, very plucky. Collection made for her at factory last week brought in 4*s*. Father has been in cycle trade, then filer, then scabbard maker. House bare but exceedingly clean. Man bears good character from employer, but not over bright. Used to earn 25*s*.

CALIFORNIA

APPENDIX C

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2. *London County Council Publications*

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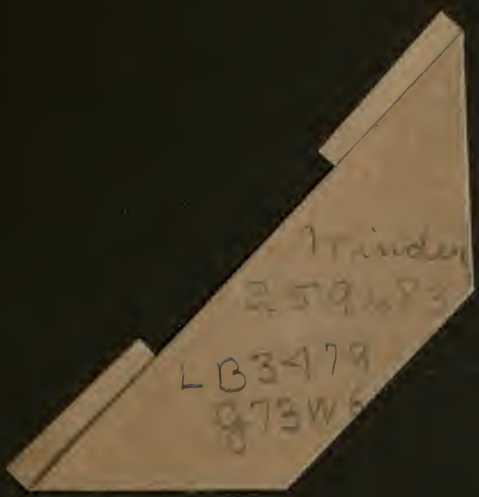
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